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THE
FLOWER GARDEN,

OR

CHAPTERS ON FLOWERS,

A SEQUEL TO FLORAL BIOGRAPHY.

BY CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.

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INTRODUCTION.

A LARGE garden is undoubtedly a source of large enjoyment ; but a small garden has this advantage, that it brings under your notice the personal and domestic concerns of every inmate of its narrow boundaries. In the former case, you must admit the aid of a gardener, who, whatever predilection he may have for his calling, will never enter fully into your views and wishes. His professional wisdom will clash with your secret partialities : he will see a necessity for closely pruning some shrubs in the wild luxuriance of which you take especial delight : he will straighten, to your great discomfiture, shoots that naturally incline to the curving line of grace ; and leave indelible traces of art where you would rather dispense with such appearances. A large garden is at best but a very limited monarchy, where all the power is vested in the administration : your Premier will indeed allow you to walk round it, and see how *he* manages mat-

ters; but beyond that your privileges are wofully curtailed.

Now, in my own little territory I am a perfect autocrat: shrubs may run as wild, twigs grow as awry, and flowers spread as unrestrainedly as I please. Not a leaf can unfold but I take personal cognizance of it; not a blossom expands that I cannot rejoice over as the fruit of my special culture. No intermediate link separates me from my loving subjects: the royal prerogative of doing no wrong is mine, upon the agreeable principle that, having no body else to please or to dissatisfy by my proceedings, my rule of right is simply to do whatever I like best. I therefore recommend to all lovers of flori-culture who are troubled with more ground than they can manage alone, that they forthwith enclose a very limited space, with a strict prohibition against intrusive hoe, rake, or pruning-knife. They will find it a most interesting experiment, if they do really love flowers as flowers deserve to be loved; and not like caps and ribbands, merely for the effect of form and colouring, irrespective of any peculiar interest in the article itself.

Probably this is not so often the case as florists may presume it to be. Few, perhaps, have accustomed themselves to particular trains of thought as they looked on the various individuals which, in their parterre, represent so many families: fewer have traced so close a connection between the flower and its appropriate meditation as to find in the former a notebook of ideas and events which but for such a memorandum would be forgotten, or very slightly retained.

This habit may be unconsciously acquired while life itself is but a gay garden of sweets, and the secret language of inexperienced confidence is, "I shall see no sorrow:" but it needs somewhat more than a sip of the bitters mingled for God's children in this mortal state to excite a relish for the mysterious sweetness thus reserved to qualify the unpalatable draught. God has given us richly all things to enjoy: the worldling may possess, but the Christian alone can enjoy these gifts. And as through the merely mechanical arrangement of types and paper, ink and pasteboard, into certain forms, a book is produced which shall contain a correct transcript of the revealed word, and become, under divine operation, the means of bringing life eternal within the grasp of its readers, so on many an inanimate object, formed, like ourselves, from the element of earth, a blessing is made to rest,—a name is written, which no man can know save he that receiveth it as a gift from God.

Over and over again have I noticed in these pages the strange power of sympathy conferred on these lovely preachers; and still, as the season of their glowing abundance returns, I am constrained to acknowledge it anew. It is indeed one of those impressions that cannot be swept away by the current of time; because every succeeding year adds something to the store of recollections, and something also to the sad experience of this world's nothingness—If that can be called nothing which has so much power to sting. Man's corruption disposes him to be fickle, ungrateful, unkind; this inflicts a wound, on some

hearts an almost intolerable wound; and when it comes from a quarter where the reverse was confidently expected, a chilling sense of the universal depravity seems to cast a blight over the whole face of the earth, and, blindly unconscious of our own participation in the general spot, we seem to stand alone, cast out and disowned by a race with whom we hardly care to claim the affinity which, nevertheless, exists in all its natural force. Under such a feeling there are some who know what it is to turn a retrospective eye, and to call up images of the departed, with the fond, regretful thought, ‘*They* loved truly, loved always—they would not have changed with the changeful world; or if they were liable so to do, how sweet to know that they were taken away before that hour arrived—that nothing damped their warm affection, or clouded the brightness of their confiding looks with mistrust and displeasure.’ At such a moment the slightest relic of a departed friend is doubly precious: a line of his writing, a sketch by his pencil, a trifle that once was his—all are invaluable: but to me the smiling aspect of a living flower, connected by one of the links so often inscribed with the memory of that departed friend, comes home to the bosom with greater power, inasmuch as it both partakes of the vitality which in the other things is wholly wanting, and also inevitably leads me to the contemplation of that which is not earthly.

There is something awful in the beauty and symmetry of a flower; even when without the superaddition of that fragrance which extends the influence

of the lovely production to the atmosphere around it. That such a thing should have been made to spring out of the colourless and scentless dust is strange; that it should be made but to wither is stranger yet: that the only abiding part, in many of the most exquisite flowers—the seed-vessel—should present an unsightly contrast to the glowing blossom which ushered it in, and become, in general, more displeasing to the sense, in proportion to its increasing value—all is a mystery: but, oh; how instructive that mystery is, when read by the revealing light of God's word! Dear, precious little comforters the flowers of the field and garden are: they first meet me on my own ground, indulging the selfish mood, saying, 'Those of whom we now tell you smiled on you to the last of their mortal existence, as we shall do: they fell, but never till they fell were their loving looks averted. This is the language that soothes a natural feeling, partaking no doubt, and largely, of natural discontent and rebellion: but the Lord has altered his beautiful world to suit the altered condition of his sinful creatures; and that the flowers that in Eden might have bloomed unchangeably under the easy culture of a faithful vicegerent, an ever-present type of his own holy, safe, and rejoicing state, now wither and die, to bring spiritual comfort home to the dying rebel. Yes, I think they die to soothe us; for I could not so love, or so intimately connect the memento with what it commemorates, if it was itself exempt from change. It seems fitting that its tints should wax pale, and its petals shrink and fall, leaving

me half reconciled to a lot so universal, and giving me the promise of again watching every budding indication of their annual return. Here it is that the natural feeling begins to rise into something more elevating. I look on the still blooming flower, and acknowledging its imaginary language, another shade of regret steals over me as I ponder on the shortness of its stay to soothe an aching heart. But I know it will return. Why? Because God has said that while the earth endures, summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, shall not cease. I have the experience of my own life added to the record of some thousands of years, that one word of his good promise has never yet failed: and I know assuredly that it never can fail, but must stand fast for ever and ever, when all seasons, with the earth itself, shall have passed away. And then some one of those rich promises will come to my mind, dissipating in its glorious light every lingering shadow, whether of discontent or of unbelief. Am I afflicted? It must needs be so, for he has spoken it. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." It is no matter whence it springs: an unkind word, or injurious suspicion, is as heavy a trial to some minds as a very serious calamity is to others: and herein, by the way, do good people so grievously err in rebuking another for smarting under what would be utterly unfelt by themselves. The Lord knows in what particular direction the patient requires to be probed; and it is singularly presumptuous on the part of an ignorant, blind stander-by, to pronounce that he means nothing by the operation, just because the

creature's wisdom would suggest a different mode of applying the instrument from that which the Creator judges best. There are some who can bear me witness, because they have experienced both, that a bodily affliction of some magnitude is light, is nothing, in comparison with unkindness, or even cold indifference, where the heart might naturally turn for the reverse. To such, sickness and pain are half welcome for the sake of the tender soothing that they call forth from beloved friends ; while health and prosperity are embittered by the lack of those sympathies on which the spirit loves to repose itself. God gives or takes away accordingly. Let him do what seemeth him good.

I have not been able to select a particular flower for this paper. The burst of beauty in my little garden bewilders me ; and having peopled it with mementos already recorded, I am at a loss to add another to the wreath. One, indeed, there is, a stranger altogether, both there and in the soil of England ; but so humble, yet so dear ! It died down to the ground, and totally disappeared in the winter : that hard season levelled many a stately tree and luxuriant shrub, and I dared not to hope that I had spared my poor wild flower. I guarded the spot, however, from the spade, and watched with as little of hope as could possibly be mingled with such anxious longing. It re-appeared—and when the long feathery leaves stretched out on every side, not rising from the ground, but overspreading it, and the small germ of a future flower was discernible in the centre, I know not for what upon this earth I would have exchanged it. It bears a little

yellow cup, much like a buttercup, though larger, and is as common a weed as can be pointed out in the meadows of its native isle, near the water's edge : and on such an edge I found it. I stood for the first, and I suppose the last time, on the margin of the most lovely lake that spreads its bright bosom to the sunbeam ; several miles in circumference, yet lying before the eye like a mirror, with its boundaries distinctly marked out, and the swelling banks so gently diversified, here with a plantation, there a meadow of emerald green, and several little islands speckling the bright surface with their beautiful verdure crowned with tufts of trees—I have it before me now, and shall have it before me while I live.

On the spot where I stood, a light and buoyant step had rested, one sunny day in June, previous to entering a small boat. Ten minutes afterwards, that spot was pressed again beneath the heavy tread of those who landed a drowned corpse and bore it away. Years had passed—I visited the place, and looked around, and amid the bewildered feeling of the moment my brain seemed to receive an uneffaceable transcript of the whole scene, and there it remains. I looked down and beheld this simple wild flower leaving its long leaves in the ripple that evermore rolled a refreshing moisture to the root : I scooped it up from the bed of transparent pebbles where it grew, a solitary green thing, with its bud of living gold turned sunward. I rooted it in native earth, and it grew under my eye, by day and night ever near me, travelling many hundred miles on my knee, until it

reached the selected spot in my small garden, where a young hawthorn waves a faint shadow near it, and a daily watering supplies the refreshment it was wont to derive from the hundred sweet springs of Lough Ouel.

I have said it was planted in Irish earth : true to its character, that handful of soil threw up a little weak seedling shamrock, which, strange to say, never once quailed or changed its vivid green during the past destructive winter. They grow together, and my hand shall never part them : for God has united the spirits in heaven, and why should I divorce the poor memorials below ? Their near neighbor is the heartsease ; and many a sweet recollection, many a far sweeter hope is clustered in a space too homely to attract the glance of taste, and so narrow as to render it a marvel that such a volume of consolation should be written there. Yet written it is ; and daily read, and frequently resorted to, for that same mild lesson alluded to in the following pages. The white stone-crop from Vinegar-Hill fell beneath the frost ; a plant from the walls of Derry died likewise, though both were cherished in a sheltered room : but the wild weed of Lough Ouel, and the shamrock of the meadow outlived it in the open air. It is better to receive whatever changes the Lord may appoint, whether atmospheric or otherwise, in the situation where he has originally placed us. How many a constitution is ruined by over-nursing, I have often remarked ; how many a mind is unnerved, and unfitted for the endurance of inevitable evils, by being too

carefully guarded from all that might shock its sensibilities, I also know too well. An early blighting of luxuriant leaves may preserve the root for future and vigorous vegetation, when the artificial covert of a roof would retain the evanescent bloom at the imminent risk of immediate destruction from any accidental admission of external air. This is also instructive, as are most of the peculiarities attending the delightful employment of horticulture : and I think such teaching finds a readier admission to the mind, when we voluntarily draw it, as the bee does his honey, from the nectary of a sweet flower.

But still the charm that most endears the flower is that resemblance to what was kind, and loving, and confiding. Guileless itself, the mind does not suspect others of sordid or unworthy motives ; and such a mind is well depicted in the aspect of a flower. Perhaps, in the whole range of intellectual suffering, not resulting from conscious guilt, there is nothing more trying than to know one's self the object of unjust suspicion : to perceive that what is done in perfect integrity of heart and uprightness of intention, with a single eye to some evident duty, or service of love, is viewed through a false, distorted medium ; or misrepresented by the craft of Satan, to alienate the affections that would otherwise flow naturally towards an individual disinterestedly employed in the service of others. There is a remedy in this case : there is an appeal that is never unanswered in the end. One alone has the power of searching the human heart : we cannot try and know our heart, but he can and

does ; and although a fearful mass of undetected sin cleaves to all that we do, or say, or think, still there is a relative uprightness of purpose, which may challenge a just judgment : as between man and man, at the hand of the Omniscient. It is when vexed by a collision with the injurious and unkind, who too often lead us to complain of being wounded in the house of our friends, that the dead pass before our mental view with all the confiding candour which belongs to a noble, loving disposition ; and we feel the bereavement in a new, and almost insupportable sense of its irreparable character. The sting of a nettle will endear the harmlessness of a violet, though the latter needs no such enhancement.

Oh what a day will that be, when every anxious thing is uprooted, and cast forth from the fair garden of this renovated earth ! The figure is of constant recurrence in scripture. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree ; and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree." "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad because of them ; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." Before that day of the church's triumph and blessedness, I shall be gathered among the clods of the valley ; and the bright offspring of the soil, which now soothe and cheer my heart, will be blossoming over my head, and telling forth to others the same precious truths that they declare to me. It is not to be supposed that such a book has been spread before man for six thousand years in characters illegible to those who glanced upon it. Isaac's meditations in the field at

eventide may have partaken of the same nature, as the gorgeous blossoms of the East unfold their glowing tints around him. David, from considering the starry heavens, may have turned his regards to the flowers of earth, and read their declaration of the glory of God in terms no less emphatic than the voiceless testimony of the skies. The skill that hung those elegant pendants on their slender stalks, and arranged a drapery of foliage around them, had a meaning in the act. I will not reject the comfort, nor disregard the instruction that they seem designed to yield me. What my gracious Lord and Saviour has invited me to consider, I will not overlook ; what he tells me that Solomon in all his glory could not equal, I will not refuse to admire ; and what he represents as being clothed by the hand of God, as a symbol of his providential care over me, I will not fail to recognize as among the sweetest tokens of his love. While I live, flowers shall multiply in my garden, and be cherished in my bosom ; and when I die, if any kind hand will place them there, flowers shall smile upon my grave

CHAPTER I.

THE CATHEDRAL.

THE new year is, in the path of life, like one of those little alcoves, or rustic benches, placed at intervals amid the beauties of some vast and picturesque domain, where the visitor is invited to rest awhile, and to contemplate from points of interest the scenery through which he is passing. We walk as along a vista, where the onward prospect is wrapped in impenetrable darkness: but what we have already trod lies open, under a broad beam, inviting retrospection: and, to me at least, every ensuing stage of the progress imparts an aspect of more mellowed loveliness to that which lies in the distance. I look back, and realize in all their minutiae those scenes which my foot can never—never tread again. Or, if it should be mine to revisit the bare scenery of those endeared spots, so changed they are—so stripped of all that rendered them precious, or so altered are my own circumstances, feelings and prospects, that they would at

best appear like the dry, artificially preserved figure of what had once bent on me bright looks of life and love. Far rather would I retrace them as they were, in the chambers of vivid imagery, than tread again their real and visible precincts.

This feeling appears to be almost universal among mankind. Even to those who seem to gather an accession of happiness with every fleeting year—and surely they are few—the past wears many a charm of softening recollection, extorting sometimes the sigh of fond regret over what is for ever gone. Whether the consciousness of life's limited duration, indissolubly connecting with former times a certainty that such a portion of our allotted space has actually fled, never to be recalled, may not influence us more than we are aware of when indulging such reminiscences, I cannot pretend to decide: I think that it does.

To one who has been brought out of the world, after participating largely in its spirit, and rejoicing in many things opposed to the^a love of God, it is sometimes wonderful to contemplate the extent to which what divines call the religious affections have been excited, long before a ray of the true light had visited their minds. Feelings even rapturously devotional may have been enkindled, and the soul, as it were, borne upwards into regions purely spiritual, while yet the heart was altogether estranged from God, and unreservedly yielded to his enemies—to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. I frequently recall with no small bewilderment of mind the emotions excited within the walls of an edifice

with which many a melting recollection is closely interwoven. Often do I, in imagination, again pace its majestic ailes, as was my wont in childhood and in early youth, bending many an awe-struck look on 'The high embowered roof,' admiring on its 'storied windows,' the broad dark depth of purple, crimson, and all those mellow colours through which the day-beam struggled to look in upon the antique tracery of richly-carved stalls; and the massive effigies, recumbent on their sculptured tombs, where generations of living men had approached to gaze and to wonder, and had retired to perish; making way for a succeeding race, who should in turn behold and depart, and die, even as they. I pass on, to the singularly fine quadrangle of cloisters, girding in a burial-ground where surely every particle of dust must once have been instinct with the spirit of life, so many centuries had contributed their relics of mouldering humanity to swell its crowded hillocks. Never have I since beheld a cemetry so rich in the rank honours of long wild grass, springing through crevices of broken gravestones—themselves scarcely less green from mossy incrustations, and meandering stains of damp—waving in the perpetual draught of air, and peering, as it seemed, through the black but beautiful arches that bounded their territory, to arrest the glance of some thoughtless passer-by, with the mute but impressive demand, "What is man?"

So vivid is the recollection of this familiar spot, that the light air now fanning me while I write seems tainted with that peculiar savour, and loaded with

that indescribable chill, which no atmospheric change could overcome. The breeze of the cloisters was always stirring, always dank, and always fraught with desolation. There was that in it which repressed the buoyancy of youthful spirits, sobering the mind into something akin with the surrounding objects. I have felt my giddy mirthfulness subside into pensive thought, as I slackened the pace frequently amounting to a run, while seeking in the cloisters that exercise which perchance a stormy day denied me elsewhere ; and when a little side-door opened, giving ingress to the band of youthful choristers, habited in their every-day surplices of dusky purple, and I marked them through the intercepting arches winding their silent way towards the great body of the church, for the performance of evening service, I have been irresistibly drawn to follow their steps ; and, taking my seat in the recess of a dark but lofty side-pew, to join in the devotions that had formed no part of my plan in visiting the cloister promenade.

It was on such occasions that I have been rapt into something so nearly resembling the fervour of true piety as to yield a clue to the otherwise inexplicable power of those delusions which blind the devotees of Rome. The impulse was certainly from without, and from around—not from within or above. Nothing can more beautifully harmonize than twilight shadows and the interior of an antique building, lofty, massive, and richly sculptured. Even the fading of those gorgeous tints upon its gothic windows seem to speak something of the fashion of this world passing away :

and when the deep slow tones of a majestic organ, touched by a master's hand, were melting as they seemed to mount, and finally lost amid the recesses of the lofty roof—when the succeeding stillness was broken by a single voice reading, perhaps, in the lesson for the day, some exquisitely sublime passage from Isaiah—when the dark-blue lining of my cushioned and curtained recess almost assumed the semblance of a funeral canopy, and a dim, unearthly character rested on all around—my feelings have so largely partaken in that character, as to impress me with the confident belief that I was holding high and full communion with HIM whom I neither loved, nor feared, nor desired to know beyond the fictitious excitement of such moments.

Under these circumstances, and beneath the closing shades of a dull October evening, I well remember the effect produced on my mind by the appointed lesson—the fifteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Corinthians: I was very young, and had never paid attention to that magnificent portion of holy writ. It was most exquisitely read, in a deep sonorous voice, by one who at least felt the poetry of the composition, and as such did justice to it. Certain I am, that it brought me into a new and strange proximity to heavenly things, which remained long after the thrilling emotion of that hour had passed away. This recollection often humbles and alarms me; for now that the Lord has, in his abundant mercy, drawn aside the veil under which all spiritual meanings lay hidden from my view, I cannot always realize the intensity

of feeling which marked that well-remembered period. It is well for the child of God that he is cautioned by many wise counsellors against the illusiveness of momentary impulses, in their origin as likely to be earthly and material, as heavenly and spiritual. Often, when elated in what seems a highly devotional frame, I suddenly put to myself the searching question, 'Wherein does this differ from the enthusiasm enkindled within the walls of my own, my beautiful cathedral?'

How beautiful that cathedral was, at the time when I fondly called it my own, is matter of history now. The hand of modern innovation has so reformed its supposed defects, so industriously applied the levelling brush of the whitewasher to its diversified knots of fruit, and flower, and story, and heraldic blazonry—so cropped, and trimmed, and planed away its redundant fretwork—so shamed the old grey stones of its venerable bulk by the spruce addenda of spic-and-span masonry, that there are few pilgrimages which I would not undertake in preference to one that should lead me to the shrine of my early devotion—the beloved memento of my joyous childhood. Whatever mania I may be subject to, the mania of reckless innovation will ever be abhorrent to my soul. I love to look upon the monuments of my country's greatness—I love to walk round about them, to mark well her bulwarks, to number her towers, and to mount guard, if so it might be given me, over every grey fragment of what the Lord so long has blessed to her safety and prosperity. My cathedral, like other

British institutions, 'has braved, a thousand years, the battle and the breeze,' and yet it stands seemingly prepared to endure for another thousand. With my consent, the finger of the spoiler should never have touched it; and spoliation is too often the true word for what, in our day, goes by the name of renovation. Yet even where the hand of judgment has unquestionably interposed to strengthen, and that of taste to improve the objects of our early attachment, how reluctantly do we trace the alteration that has removed or glossed over some remembered peculiarity! A blemish it might be: but it formed a link in the delicate chain of fond recollections; and its removal is a robbery of our treasure-house.

The place of my birth was remarkable for its architectural relics of antiquity; and the surrounding country displayed many an old-fashioned fabric, from the venerable mansion that had cradled a long line of nobles, to the humble but substantial farm-house, with its narrow gables, its jutting eaves, and low, wide casements set deep in frame-work of rudely carved stone. It has been my lot for many years to dwell in places as dissimilar from these early haunts as are the elegant triflings of modern art from the laboured and enduring workmanship of former ages. Hence, when my rambles bring me suddenly within view of some time-worn edifice—from which no part of England is altogether free—the sensations excited are indiscribly strong. A chord is touched, that seems to awake an echo from every little cell of slumbering memory; and I am carried back to times and scenes, thoughts

and feelings, wherein it is hard to say whether the painful or the pleasurable emotion predominates.

Can the Christian then dwell with fondness on days that came and went, leaving him as they found him, living without hope and without God in the world? Ought not the retrospection to be one of unmingled shame and sorrow, while, viewed in the light of gospel truth, each event furnishes a memento of his rebellion against the Most High? Such thoughts have troubled me, I confess; but there is one consideration that blends very sweetly with the reminiscence of by-gone days—it is beautifully expressed in the eighth chapter of Deuteronomy, “And thou shalt *remember* all the way which the Lord thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness. . . . Thou shalt also consider in thine heart that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.” To lose the remembrance of former days were to forget the wonders which the Lord hath wrought: and to retrace them with gloomy repugnance were to rob Him of much glory due unto His name. Oh, there are many who sported with me through the airy cloisters, and snatched the long grass as they bounded by, who trifled on through maturer years, and suddenly passed away to a world where they never had sent one serious thought before them. There are others, still robust and active denizens of busy life, whose every hope is bounded by the visible earth to the dust of which their souls tenaciously cleave, who recognize not the long-suffering of a waiting Saviour in the time thus given, nor in their occasional disappointments the

chastening hand of a Father. And some there are, who, led by paths of endless variety, have reached the narrow way that tends Zionward, and, meeting with the companion of their earliest years, can take delight in raising a mutual Ebenezer of remembrances and thanksgivings with which no stranger may intermeddle. "The God which led me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil :"—who can take up that grateful ascription of praise, without permitting his mind to wander back, and realize the days wherein he was guided by One whom then he had not known !

I have been mercifully kept from running into any extreme of doctrine, fully convinced that both extremes are alike removed from the solid and simple truth ; but the pre-ordaining love of God in Christ, electing from the mass of self-destroying wanderers some whom he would compel to come in, while others, to whom the door of invitation was opened equally wide through the all-atoning efficacy of the Saviour's cross, would despise and perish—this precious fact throws a sun-beam over every chequered scene that memory can revisit. "Goodness and mercy have *followed* me all my life long." I cannot name an hour, or point to a spot, where they ceased the pursuit so long eluded by the self-doomed sinner. Full well do I remember how they whispered with me in the cloistered aisle, and spoke aloud in the gracious words that were to me but as a very lovely song. My stubborn rebellion is a monument of my Lord's sparing mercy—my wilful wanderings of His pursuing

goodness. If no change had passed on my beautiful cathedral, I would hasten to revisit every haunt beneath its arching roof; and there would I recall the thoughts of other years, and own the Spirit of God to have been continually pleading with my spirit, beseeching me to turn, and I would not. Methinks I could now read aright the lesson of mortality, so strangely misinterpreted before; and find cause for double endearment, through the operation of divine grace, in what was always fondly cherished by natural feeling. Surely the blessedness of the heavenly Canaan will be enhanced by a broad, clear view of the wilderness through which the Lord led his stiff-necked and rebellious, but finally subdued and rescued people. We rob God of much glory, when we avert our eyes from what has been. He promises to cast our sins into the depths of the sea—are we, therefore, to bury his mercies in oblivion? He says, that he will remember our iniquities no more; and we, while musing on the days that are passed, must give the glad response, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits!”

CHAPTER II.

THE AMARANTHUS.

It is not in the power of winter, however severe and sweeping in his operations among the flowers, to deprive me of all my store. Though every leaf should wither, and every root become a mass of corruption, and not a blossom remain in the conservatory, I am always provided, not only with one, but a complete bouquet of bright and showy flowers. The Amaranthus, in all its varieties of form and colour, with everlastings of purple or of gold, and a rich assemblage of grasses that appear quite indestructible, from this magic group. I bought it in the street, of a poor, sickly-looking, aged woman, who evidently wanted the price of her 'Christmas posy' to supply the craving of hunger; but this common-place mode of acquisition by no means lessened the interest of the purchase. What has been touched by the poor, possesses a peculiar character in my eyes: and I could not but think, when taking the gay bouquet from a withered hand, how tenderly the Lord provides for their wants, whom we so little consider in the midst of our festivities.

The intense cold that followed, soon left my winter nosegay without a rival, and, excepting the border of box that encircled it, not a change has yet appeared, not a tint has faded, not a leaf fallen. These flowers are an exception to the general rule, they have been cut down, yet neither dried up nor withered; even the 'flower of grass,' that impressive emblem of man's glory and godliness, waves in its pristine grace, and shines brightly when a sun-beam falls aslant upon the cluster. I must needs apply this: not indeed to an individual, but to a race, far more to be wondered at than these imperishable flowers. A race long since deprived of life-giving fatness of the root; dead, yet continually before us in all the reality of bustling life. Need I name them?—the Lord's own ancient people, the dispersed of Judah, the 'nation scattered and peeled,' and trodden under foot; familiar with every storm that can rage without, and preyed upon by every corrupt principle within, separated from the stem, deprived of spiritual nutriment, yet surviving all; and destined to survive, in pre-eminent glory, the pride of that earth which now scorns them. Oh, I cannot look upon the unfading *Amaranthus* without recalling those precious words, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." I read in it at once the promise and its fulfilment; I see what the Lord has said he would do: I see what he actually does, and I know assuredly what he will yet do. I have no more doubt of the literal restoration of Judah and Israel to the literal Canaan, no more doubt that in their own land "they shall possess the double," and

shine the brightest in a bright and glorious church on earth, than I have of my existence. The time is not now far off when the Lord will be gracious to his land, and pity his people; when he will heal their hurt, and gather them, and watch over them to do them good, and shew the world how dearly his poor Israel is 'loved for the fathers' sake.' The whole church sends up the petition, "Thy kingdom come," and the coming of that kingdom will be to the despised Jew a receiving again into God's favour; and that receiving again of the Jew shall be to the Gentiles, "life from the dead."

Indissolubly connected with this delightful subject is the name, the image of one who has often rejoiced with me over those sweet promises to Israel, which none can gainsay without depriving the holy scriptures of all literal meaning, and debasing them into a cluster of shadows. He was a Gentile by birth, but in spirit an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile. Awake to all that concerned the kingdom and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, he was peculiarly alive to the rich portion secured to the children of Abraham: and dearly did he prize the privileges of devoting himself to them. Often have I seen him, in his pulpit, with the little ones of the Hebrew schools ranged in the opposite gallery, catching new zeal, new energy, new confidence from a glance at that precious charge: and often have I beheld him, in the midst of the Hebrew boys, lost in thoughtful contemplation of the harvest that should follow that first-fruits offering, presented in faith and hope. I have also known him

send for a considerable number of the children to his own hospitable abode, and range them before him, and hold sweet converse with them concerning their own Messiah, the Prince. There was no flashing enthusiasm about him, but a deep, calm, settled conviction that Israel should yet be gathered, and that in having his own portion of labour assigned in that field, he was honoured above all others. He was a man of thought, of study, and of prayer, and this was the element wherein he dwelt—the exceeding great and precious promises given to the children of the fathers and the prophets. Others might rise in the church, or seek the promotion of their worldly interests: to him it sufficed that he came within the scope of that oft-repeated declaration, “Blessed is he that blesseth Thee.”

Seven years have now passed since I sojourned under that roof with the good old Simeon for my fellow-guest; and very dear to me is the recollection. I had before been privileged there beyond all other places: I had caught some sparkles from the brilliant, though eccentric flashes of Wolff, and had identified myself with a little circle whose great bond of union was the heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel, that they might be saved; and whose hourly study it was to devise plans for forwarding the blessed work. I had sat many a summer’s day under the tall, branching tulip trees, that threw their refreshing shadow on the smooth grass plat: and while the lovely groupe of youthful faces—for my friend had a goodly array of olive-branches round about his table—added life and beauty

to the scene in itself most sweet, I have conversed with him and his beloved partner on the coming day, when Israel should sit each one under his own vine and under his own fig-tree, with none to make them afraid.

At the period of my first and successive visits there was one present also, whose joyous temper brought mirth into every circle. They loved him much, and greatly did he enjoy the social freedom that dwelt there. A thousand little incidents crowd on my recollection as I recall those days: but Mr. H. knew and deeply sympathized in my chief solicitude for that beloved one; and I trust they are now rejoicing together in the presence of the Lamb. Never can I forget the sweet words of comfort given me by Mr. H. when the terrible stroke of sudden bereavement fell upon me. 'Oh, my sister, our God is all-powerful; even the "Lord save me" of drowning Peter was enough.' There was a fitness in the application, ignorant as we then were of the state of that beloved object's mind, which met the case exactly, and proved a word in due season to a fainting heart. My last visit was made in a wintry season, and under circumstances of peculiar desolation. He, who brightened us all by his sunshiny presence, had long been laid beneath the sod; it was not yet green over the dumb boy's grave; and other circumstances combined to depress me unusually. My friend also was declining in health, and sorely exercised in mind by the perplexities recently introduced into the church by his most beloved associate—the brilliant, but sadly deluded and deluding Irving. He

was absorbed in many anxious thoughts, and the presence of Mr. Simeon proved most cheering to us all. The glorious subject of Israel's redemption occupied each heart, and dwelt on every tongue : and truly I can say, that, like the Amaranthus, my valued friend shone in bright contrast to the winter around him, while dwelling on that 'everlasting love' which is pledged to accomplish the deliverance of God's people.

The hours were dearly prized by me, little as I anticipated a speedy separation of the parent from his children, the husband from his partner, and the pastor from his flock. I saw him but once again, and that was upon the platform of a densely-crowded meeting, when, unexpectedly, he rose for a few moments, to avow himself the author of a testimony against the withering and blasting influence of Socinianism, in a society to which he was warmly attached. He rose, indeed, like an apparition ; and if I was pained at the emaciated figure and pallid aspect—so changed from what he had even a few weeks before appeared—still more did I rejoice and glory in the stedfast, though meek determination, with which the disciple voluntarily stood forth to acknowledge how zealously he was affected in a good thing—how jealous of the least possible taint on the doctrine of the great God, his Saviour. He made his avowal, looked calmly round upon a thousand frowning brows, and resumed his seat, beyond my ken. It was a striking incident, rendered indelible by the subsequent removal of that faithful servant from the vineyard below to the rest.

ing-place above. Once more I visited, for a few hours, the mansion of hospitality and love: the tulip-trees were in full beauty, the lawn was soft and verdant as ever, the vine mantled richly over the windows, and flowers in gay profusion breathed their sweet perfume through the closed shutters. I could not look out upon what was so fair: a glance towards the one object that lay concealed beneath a black pall, never more to be unveiled to mortal eye, filled my heart, to the exclusion of earth's brightest beauties. I thought on the outcasts of Israel and the dispersed of Judah:—I thought, how often had those lips breathed the language, 'Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die, O house of Israel?'—how frequently those lifeless hands had dispensed the water of baptism, and the consecrated elements of the Lord's supper, to such as obeyed the call: and how high that heart had beat in holy exultation over the lost sheep so gathered back into the fold. One short sentence of inspiration expressed what no tongue of man or angel could otherwise have uttered, "Blessed is he that blesseth Thee."

Sitting down to supper with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, is our Lord's own description of the privileges reserved for such as be Abraham's children by faith; and, blessed be His holy name!—there is no difference of Jew or Gentile in that consummation of eternal felicity. But I cannot imagine with what eye or with what understanding those persons read the bible, who see there no especial reference to the continued elder-brotherhood of the literal Israelite, even to the end of the world: or who

consider that in the wide promulgation of the gospel, for which we are taught to look and to pray, the converted Jew will not be made a chosen and peculiarly honoured instrument in the Lord's hands. Not that I expect the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ, by a quiet extension of the truth. No, I believe that the wine-press of wrath must first be trodden, and the enemies of the Son be broken to pieces—dashed asunder like the shreds of a potter's vessel. I believe that Great Babylon, papal Rome, must come in remembrance before him, and receive the cup of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God, in recompense for the wine of the wrath of her fornications, wherewith she has seduced the kings of the earth, and blasphemed the Most High. I believe that the whole company of Antichrist, papal and infidel, must be violently overthrown, and the day of vengeance usher in the year of the redeemed of the Lord. It is in combination with all this, that I look for the full in-gathering of God's ancient people, their re-establishment in the land which he gave unto their fathers, to Abraham and his seed for ever, the restoration of that land to more than its pristine fertility, and the abundant going forth of the law of the Lord from Jerusalem, by means of his own reconciled Israel—once more, and in a higher sense than ever, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, a blessing to the utter-most end of the earth.

When it first pleased God, by his Spirit, to open my understanding to those things which are foolishness to the natural man, and before I enjoyed the privilege of

communion, by word or letter, with any of his people, I was so powerfully struck by the distinctness of the promises given to the literal seed of Abraham, that I often devised plans for sending forth fishers to fish, and hunters to hunt for them; often prayed over the ninth chapter of Daniel: and longed to proclaim to others which I supposed a new discovery—that Israel should again blossom, and bud, and fill the world with fruit. I know not whether my surprise or my joy was the greater, on being told after a long while, that an extensive and increasing society was in actual operation to this very end: and however slightly I may have seemed to regard the subject, under the conviction that my own line of service was marked in a different path, I think there is no prospect of spiritual blessedness, or temporal prosperity for Christ's church, presented to my mind, wherein "THE JEW FIRST" is not recognized. Yes, like my winter nosegay, so bright in death, the several shoots of that venerable stem, which have yet a name to live and are dead, speak the language of assured promise to me. The root that bore them still survives, a perennial, destined to bloom again in the multitude of its blossoms, and to send forth many an off-set to other gardens, where the Lord shall plant them, and keep them, and water them every moment.

It is a bitter ingredient in the overflowing curse of Rome, that, pagan or papal, she has ever persecuted the Jews. That brand is imprinted so deeply, that the fires now kindling for her will not burn it out:—"Cursed is he that curseth thee." It is the singular

privilege of poor Ireland that she is totally free from this stigma, so widely extended over Europe; and it is well known how, in her deep poverty, the riches of her liberality have abounded towards the missionary work now carried on among the Hebrew people; and shall not poor Ireland one day set her seal, despised and forsaken as she now is, to the equally sure record, "Blessed is he that blesseth Thee." God's blaspheming enemy is still permitted, to a great extent, to trample down one who never set her foot upon the neck of God's prostrate people: but all these things are had in remembrance before him, and when he maketh inquisition for blood he will not forget it. The Amaranthus is a treasury of precious thoughts, recollections, promises, and hopes—connected with the most glorious subject that can possibly occupy the mind of man—the coming, kingdom, and glory of the Messiah. Oh, that he would shortly accomplish the number of his elect, and hasten that hour! The world is lying dead around; the torpor of indifference is only varied by the tumult of tempestuous strife. The pleasures of earth, like the gay flowers that fell before the frost, perish in the using; and the thorns stand out in naked savageness to mock the eye that seeks for the fair mantle that once concealed them. Benumbed or torn away, all has so eluded my grasp, that while casting a glance around I am tempted to inquire, Did flowers ever bloom here; or can they again make bright this desolated ground? But the lovely Amaranthus smiles an answer, conveying to my soul that sublime word, "I am the Lord; I change not." Yea, and

while humbly pleading the privilege of an ingrafted Gentile branch, partaking of the root and fatness of the parent tree, I am enabled to receive, on behalf of the literal Israel, the full pledge, the immutable promise founded on the immutability of Him who has spoken it: "I am the Lord; I change not: therefore ye sons OF JACOB are not consumed."

CHAPTER III.

THE VIOLET.

How sweet is the promise of an approaching spring, when winter has firmly established his severe dominion! Light is always lovely; but never so precious as when shining in a dark place: a star, 'distinct though distant,' bearing witness that we are on the right track to 'the haven where we would be.' Such a light, we are told, is the sure word of prophecy, itself an earnest of what it promises, even as the pole-star in the midnight sky is of the day-beam that shall break in the east, whither it enables us, by its bearing, to direct our watchful gaze. A promise too, and an earnest, of a more genial season are united in the lovely little flower that is breathing its rich perfume around me now. The Russian Violet, formed to retain both tint and fragrance through the most biting severity of weather, gives me this lesson of hope: bringing also in its train many a recollection no less dear than are the anticipations it numbers.

It has often been a question with me whether hope or faith is the more vividly depicted in this flower:

but they are inseparable, or, at least they ought to be so. "Hope that is seen is not hope : for what a man seeth, how doth he yet hope for?" and again, "Faith is the evidence of things not seen." Each has its eye fixed on what the flesh cannot behold : each is in itself an invisible good, yet diffusing by its presence such sweets as nothing else can shed. This is the property of the violet ; it droops its head, and hides beneath the foliage of a bank, and makes itself known, not through the medium of our sight, but by the sense of delicious enjoyment, when we pass by its fragrance-breathing covert. To most minds there is something attractive in the mysterious ; and from childhood I have taken special pleasure in the ramble of which the professed object was to pick violets. With small baskets pendant from our hands, often have we, as a lively troop of youngsters, sallied forth along the lane, over the meadow, and down by the long narrow channel that separated the road from its tall hedge-row fence, where ran a shallow stream of tolerably pure water, supplied by a neighbouring spring. This stream rose among the pebbles, under a foot-bridge of light planks, and after spreading around, in different directions, as if uncertain which way to shape its future course, it finally settled to divide itself, and replenished the excavations on either side the aforementioned hedge. Perhaps it was the abundant moisture thus supplied that caused the vegetation of the bank to shoot so high and spread so luxuriantly. Certain it is that, what with the bright holly and its ruby berries throughout winter, the sweet hawthorn

flower in May, the briar rose and strangling honeysuckle in the summer months, and the overhanging mass of bramble, festooned with the wild vine, to autumn's close, this was a very king of hedges. Here and there, a stout knotted oak threw out its capacious, though not lofty trunk, seeking, as it were, to hide the wounds inflicted on its head by a superabundance of foliage: while, beneath the shelter of these various guardians appeared a succession of wild flowers, so numerous, so abundant, that one wondered how they found room to grow, or left space sufficient to exhibit the peculiarly cool and refreshing green that formed the ground work of the enchanting tapestry.

Here it was that the violet loved to hide its head: not growing on the bank beyond, but lurking under a sort of projecting shelf on our side of the channel. No dusty road was bordered by the little stream: the carriage-way was unfrequented except by the vehicles employed in agricultural operations on the property; a well-fastened gate at the end excluding all others. Accordingly, the grass sprang up at will, save only in the track of the horse and wheels; and a broad border of dwarf furze, intermingled with fern and stately thistles, separated this road from the high, verdant footpath that straggled in unequal width nearest the hedge. Here we roamed, together or apart, whether in quest of wild flowers, or merely for a stroll: but I soon discovered a more tempting track, and many a time did I steal through a gap, close beside one of the stunted oaks, to enjoy the solitude that few others cared to court.

The interior side of the hedge was far less gay, but to me more attractive: the channel there was so narrow as to be hardly perceptible, while the bank was smoother, more abrupt, and bearing only such flowers as love the shade. Violets there were in unsuspected profusion, for I never told how rich a store I had discovered, neither did I gather them. Their fragrance satisfied me as I slowly wandered along, peering over the fair pasturage that stretched northward, and lifting many a look to the line of distant hills, basking in the sunshine from which I was screened by that tall fence. *My* violet bank was like a miser's hoard, guarded from other hands, and untouched by my own. It seemed so in keeping with the innocent, shy-looking lambs that, at the same season, were trying their limbs on the grass, that I never wished to rob the landscape of its fanciful association. Oh the light, the beauty of tender spring, as it meets a youthful spirit, contemplative, but still unclouded with the cares of life! The Violets before me are violets also, as beautiful, as odorous, as any that ever sweetened my path: but the external scenery of chill, confirmed winter that surrounds me is not more dissimilar from the budding luxuriance of the sunshiny landscape, instinct with life and motion, than are the inward cogitations that accompany my present employment from the dreams of that period. The flower is the same, and the flower only: I can bend over it until, 'The past returns, the present flies'—until the frost and snow of cheerless winter are replaced in my thoughts by the budding graces of ad-

vanced spring; and the turmoil, the anxieties, the disappointments, the perplexities of every day give place to the placid flow of feeling that rolled along so softly, yet so brightly, as I rambled beside the Violet bank.

But retrospections of past happiness do not produce this tranquillity of spirit; though divested by distance and time of the little inequalities that even then ruffled its course. They rather seem to afford a sort of foretaste, a faint specimen of what the human mind is capable of enjoying, when relieved alike from cares for the present and from cares for the future. Faint, indeed, is the shadow so long past of the substance that is yet to come: but self appears to vanish from the picture when I contemplate the delights reserved for, perhaps, a future race of earth's inhabitants, when the glorious day of her promised renovation dawns, and the great enemy of their peace is chained, and the kingdoms of this world openly become what in reality they never ceased to be—the kingdom of our God and of his Christ. That such a period of blessedness is in store for the church, no reader of scripture thinks of denying: that the period draws rapidly near, no observer of passing signs can doubt. I am not going to enter upon the difficult ground of millenarian doctrine: my own views are fixed and settled, so far as I can trace the sure word of prophecy: and that is, perhaps, a little further than I am in the habit of proclaiming. It is a subject better suited for private meditation than for the noisy, and sometimes unfriendly discussions that result from forcing it into notice.

Nothing can be more sweet, more profitable, than to exchange thoughts upon it with one who sympathizes in our views and hopes : few things more ungracious than to parade it before the unwilling eyes of a brother or sister who beholds it through a different medium : but this I will say, that the Violet—and above all the Russian Violet—is identified in my mind with a hope that will not make ashamed because it is founded on what the Lord hath spoken concerning the world and the church in the latter-day glory.

By the world I do not mean that which hateth Christ and his people, but the material world, which he formed at the first so very good, to be the habitation of an obedient, happy race of beings—the original regalia, whereof some scattered and broken gems lie around us, go where we will, bespeaking what must have been the grandeur of the combination that once existed ; what will be the magnificence of its fututure display. The earth, perhaps, will even then require the hand of labour and of skill to direct its abundant productions : it may be once more a garden of Eden, and man will be set in it to dress and to keep it, as of old : for a state of inactivity is incompatible with a state of perfect enjoyment. But the foot will not then be torn by thorns and briers, nor the spirit wounded by unkindness : the hand will not know the sting of venomous plant or reptile, neither will the conscience be stung by virulent passions, or unavailing remorse. The strong will not oppress the weak, nor the mighty prey on the helpless. Imperfection and infirmity must needs cleave to hu-

manity, in that which is not destined to be its final state of being; but when all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest, when none shall hurt nor destroy in all his holy mountain, when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of his glory, and the accuser of the brethren cast down, the roaring and devouring lion chained, and the corrupt principle in man, restrained by victorious grace, find no tempting fiend to urge it into rebellious action,—oh it will be a joyous thing to look abroad upon a renovated creation, and to hold sweet communion with the Most High, in the midst of His shining handy-work!

I cannot attach individual biography to this sweet flower, the Violet; for I have confined the record of these associations to the departed, and of those only D—— and the dumb boy took delight in the subject; though, blessed be God! I have many dear living friends with whom to hold sweet converse upon it. Nay, the Violet has an antitype too; but long, very long may it be ere that beloved individual's name shall appear in any record of the departed! Still, amid “a multitude of thoughts”—they might safely be varied like the psalm, and translated “sorrows” too—that I have in my mind, it may be forgiven if I welcome the refreshment breathed on my soul by this gentle little visitor, the soft, sweet Violet, with its serious, yet cheerful countenance, its tranquillizing influence, and its promise of happier days. The individual referred to, will probably read these passages: but will be the last to suspect the identity: and that which has never been spoken cannot be betrayed.

Therefore, of all my Violet-natured friends, none need be apprehensive of any further publication than my dear little store on the north side of the hedge experienced.

I have named D—— as taking delight in this subject: in reality, he was most stiffly opposed to what are called the modern millenarian views, including a personal reign of Christ for a thousand years on this visible earth. I well remember his answer to a friend, who, in trying to combat his objections said, ‘Suppose a person were to exclaim to you, Yonder is the Lord, sitting in that cloud, coming in glory towards us, would you not look up?’ D—— briskly replied, ‘No, I would not: for it is written, “If they say unto you, lo here is Christ, or lo there, believe them not.”’ The subject was, of course, a personal pre-millennial advent; and when in more familiar discourse, we have talked over the matter, he has often said to me, ‘Never mind, dear friend, let him *now* fix his throne in our hearts; and whensoever and wheresoever he appears to reign, you and I shall reign with him.’ I did not so far differ from him, nor do I now, as to excite any debate; and very delightful were the walks that we have taken, amid wild, but beautiful scenery, anticipating the destruction of all that could harm, and the re-establishment of all that could rejoice the eye and the heart of man, when the promised period should arrive of the Lord’s reign—be it of what nature it might.

The Russian Violet, springing from the frozen ground, amid storms and every mark of devastation, presents also a more exact type of what I conceive

will be the circumstances of that period. That the world will be converted by the preaching of the gospel, I have not the slightest expectation. Judgments most terrible, such a blasting of the breath of divine displeasure as shall wither the nations, such a breaking to pieces under the rod of his wrath as the rending of the wildest tempest never inflicted on the shrivelled leaves of the frost-nipped forest, are what I look for, as the sure precursors of that glowing spring. I know that the great papal Babylon, and the blasphemy-branded beast of infidelity which she is even now bestriding, shall be destroyed by the brightness of the Lord's coming: I know that the princes and mighty men, and all the host of their antichristian alliance, shall vainly cry to the mountains to fall on them, and to the rocks to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb. The gospel must be preached as a witness throughout the world, and then shall the end come: and oh, what a blessedness will be theirs who see the, perhaps, few souls gathered out, through their instrumentality, from the doomed mass, enabled to shelter themselves not from, but *in* the hand of that awful King? When the day of vengeance is in his heart to execute it, then the year of his redeemed is come. When the great day of his wrath arrives, the weakest are they who shall be found able to stand—even such as have become little children, that they may enter the kingdom of heaven.

It is when contemplating the horrors of that fiery tempest, that the soul which has taken refuge in Jesus can find a calm amid the petty storms of the passing

day. It is when dwelling on the promised unity and peace of the Redeemer's church, the predicted beauty and fertility, and holiness of this fair world, that we can smile upon the disfiguring work of these wintry elements. Whatever allowance be made for the highly figurative language of scripture, nothing can divest it of the plain literal meaning that breathes from every page of its prophetic announcements. To argue that because all believers are children of faithful Abraham, therefore the promises made to his actual race are all to be taken spiritually, and that no future restoration is in store for the dispersed of Judah and the outcasts of Israel; or that because the enlargement and blessedness of the church are often predicted under the similitude of material things, we are therefore not to look for an actual restoration of much that has been lost or defaced, through the usurpation of Satan and the abounding of permitted iniquity—is just to degrade the Bible into a book of riddles, calculated to raise false hopes, and to invite expectations that are never to be realized.

This frigid and confined plan of interpretation I leave to those who take no pleasure in surveying the traces of God's footsteps among his visible works: or whose mortal lot is one of such unruffled quietude, or of such utter abstraction from present things, that they see not any ground for desiring a change in the face of the earth, until all be finally destroyed. I love to think otherwise: I love to look at the uniform uninterrupted course of the immense machinery of the heavens; and believing this to be the only spot where the order and har-

mony of a perfect creation have been interrupted, to anticipate a day when our little globe shall once more move on, not only obedient to those laws which have not been, cannot be broken, but also in the loveliness with which the Lord at first invested her, and which has been so fearfully marred, trampled on by his rebellious foes. What have the innocent elements done, that we should resolve to believe that an exterminating decree has gone forth against them, in their present degraded state? We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together—that the creature was made subject to vanity not willingly :—but I am touching on debateable ground ; and it will be better to ponder in silence on these themes over my sweet Violet, which sends back to me all the breathings of hope, patiently waiting for that which yet it sees not.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LILY OF THE VALLEY.

SPRING is yet young; and the severity of a biting winter has retarded the appearance of much that would, in milder seasons, have shewn itself. It was unreasonable to stroll with inquiring looks into the shady corner of my little garden allotted to that lovely summer flower, the Lily of the Valley, and examine the unstirred earth for tokens of what I had as yet no right to expect. The flower was before my mental eye, in all the delicate grace for which it is so conspicuous; and the train of thought whence originated my premature search will not allow itself to be banished. I must, then, forestal the Lily, and permit imagination to furnish the type, while in sorrowful reality the antitype engrosses my feelings.

It is now some years since the association was formed between the flower and the individual: far more probable it was, in the course of nature, and under existing circumstances, that both should have bent over my humble grave, than that the secret link which my fancy formed between them should ever be recorded in these faint outlines of the departed. But thus

the Lord has willed ; and we poor children of mortality can only lay our mouths to kindred dust, and say, “Even so, Father.” Flowers often appear to me to have been made for the express purpose of affording admonition to the fair and blooming : at least in their wrecked condition. I know not if the flowers in the garden that Adam was set to dress and to keep were perishable before his act of sin brought death into the world : I only know that now “the grass withereth, the flower fadeth ;” and in sad unison with them “the fashion of this world passeth away.” And “as for man his days are as grass : as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.” We naturally bear witness to the beauty and applicability of the symbol, even before it has been brought home to our hearts by an unwilling appropriation—before the bright blossom that decked our own bower has been prostrated at our feet by the rending blast, the devouring worm, or the mysterious process of unexplained decay ; but when that has occurred—when the flower to which the loved one was likened becomes the sad remembrancer of what has left our sight for ever, how thrilling is the appeal contained in those numerous passages of holy writ that afford us a higher than human authority for the symbol that naturally commends itself to the mind !

When I first beheld Zelia, she was as yet a bride ; and certainly the loveliness of her aspect could not be surpassed. I had heard of her as being singularly handsome ; but the portraiture my fancy drew came far short of the original. Her tall, elegant form, the exquisite symmetry of her features, and that delicate

transparency of complexion that distinguishes the maidens of her native country—the land of soft zephyrs and gentle dews—struck me at once as entitling her to a place among the fairest flowers of the garden; and a subsequent acquaintance bringing under my observation the quiet humility, retiring modesty, and child-like simplicity of her character. assigned her a locality of fitness of which none who knew her could dispute. In loveliness, delicacy, grace, and sweetness, Zelia claimed to be the Lily of the Valley among my treasures. She would have smiled, with a further resemblance to the innocent and happy-looking flower, had she heard me say so: but she knew it not. I have seen her fair face bent over these chapters, with emotion heightening its bloom, little thinking that they were to become the record of her own short transit across my path.

Never did the most enthusiastic florists watch the pride and glory of his parterre as I have seen the appointed cherisher of Zelia fulfil his happy charge. Ardent and affectionate even beyond the common characteristic of his race, he superintended the transplantation of his delicate blossom to this rougher atmosphere from the more genial west, and even when the lip restrained its language, which was not always the case, I have marked the proud glance, scanning a whole cluster of fair girls, as in defiance of any competitor who should dispute the palm of beauty with her. I have marked it, and trembled; for I knew the frailty of the tenure whereby he held his treasure; and in the very tenacity of his grasp I read an augury

of bereavement. Yet the contrast gave a finish to the picture : his passionate admiration threw a light, as it were, on the beauty of her calm unconsciousness of that which called it forth. I never traced in her look or gesture a moment of vanity : nor observed a ruffle on her quiet aspect, save when disturbed by solicitude for his peace, whose extreme sensitiveness laid him open to many a wound that would have been an unfelt collision to one of colder temperament. ‘Awake to the flowers,’ he was peculiarly liable to be ‘touched by the thorns ;’ little would he have heeded them had he foreseen the poignard that was being sharpened for the bosom of his earthly peace and joy !

The tenderness of her concern for him rendered her delicate constitution more susceptible of injury ; some severe trials of health quite undermined it : but we thought this Lily of the Valley would prove as enduring as her hardy, though delicate-looking type, which fades indeed, and bows its head beneath the sod under a rough visitation, yet starts up again with the reviving year, and re-asserts its pre-eminence of place among the ornaments of the earth. Zelia, restored to the full bloom of health, and in the increased radiance of beauty, was, by the will of God, removed from the comparative retirement where we had met, to a scene so far dissimilar, that, had I not known her to have been a child of God, I should have despaired of her retaining the resemblance to my simple Lily. It was so far the path of duty that no choice could be exercised : but the call which fixed the sphere of her hus.

band's labours in the midst of metropolitan society, exposed them both to the deadliest of all snares, popularity and adulation.

Poor, blind, unbelieving creatures that we are ! If a man but devote himself to a pursuit, if he rear and nurse a flower for his proper credit and renown, no less than his pleasure, we never suspect that he will carelessly leave it, in its promise of prime, to be rent by the gale or trampled by the hoof. We trust him that for his own sake he will guard the work of his hands. But even this poor measure of confidence we are slow to place in Him who plants trees of righteousness that he in them may be glorified. Knowing that the Lord doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men, we cannot doubt the meaning of his dispensations. If we pass by, and miss the flower, and behold no vestige thereof in its wonted place, what are we to conclude but that the careful gardener foresaw some coming storm, or the rude intrusion of some defiling tread, and housed the delicate shrub from harm ? Oh, it would have been sad to see the petals of the beauteous lily withering under a burning sun, or disfigured by the reptile's trailing course, or bruised and prostrate in the unclean soil from which it had been lifted to bloom in the pure atmosphere of heaven. It was better to contemplate the vacant spot, and to mourn over a temporary separation, with the sweet assurance that such occurred only because the Author of its being would preserve it unharmed and undefiled, to flourish in his presence, far removed from every foe.

It was by no lingering ailment that the removal of our sweet Lily of the Valley was affected. She had bided her time, and rejoiced that a man was born into the world and smiled back, in returning convalescence, the fond father's redoubled delights as he looked on the soft blossom that reposed on her pillow. But the pestilence walking in darkness found unsuspected admission to the scene—she was no subject for its sharp visitation—a few, a very few short days, and no more remained of that young wife and mother than what claimed the last sad office of agonized love—to be shrouded in darkness, and laid low, till the morning shall break that will know no closing night: till the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout; with the voice of the Archangel, and the trump of God: till the life-restoring mandate is issued, “Gather my saints together unto me,” and the dead in Christ, rising first, shall encircle the throne of Him who comes not again to suffer, but to reign; and to fulfil the blessed promise that they who here suffered with him shall then reign with him also.

‘If we suffer with him’—it is a startling ‘if.’ Suffer we must, for we are born to it, in virtue of our inbred guilt and corruption; but to suffer with Christ is a mysterious privilege alike inaccessible and unintelligible to the carnal mind. He alone who knows that Christ has suffered for him can suffer with Christ. It is not ours, as in the days of the infant or awakening church, to receive the cup of persecution: the sword does not flash above our heads, nor the faggot kindle at our feet; nor are the untamed beasts of the wood

let loose upon our bodies. But since to suffer with Christ is the decreed pathway to the kingdom of his glory, we may rest assured that He who has secured the end will prepare the appointed road. To contemplate the Saviour in his humiliation and affliction, and to arm ourselves with the like mind, is all that rests with us. "Be still; and know that I am God," is like the language of preparative warning, and of subsequent support. It is a terrible lesson for flesh to learn—yea, impossible that flesh should ever learn it: but that which is contrary to the flesh receives the stroke, and bends with the might of a renewed will, the otherwise immoveable sinew of the neck. Oh the stupendous working that achieved the sublime victory when "Aaron held his peace!"

But nature, thus subdued, is not crushed beneath the iron fetters of a pitiless conqueror. "Cast down, but not destroyed," she weeps, and finds the tenderest of all sympathy in him whose mercy smote because he loved. We know the flower is but removed from the breath of uncongenial air, and in that we cannot mourn; but the eye has lost its delight, the heart its treasure, the home its sweetest charm. How desolate now, and blighted appears the spot that was as the garden of Eden! How cold and comfortless the earth that her presence clad in beauty! It would seem as though the very sunbeam was only attracted by the flower; and now on the naked soil it strikes harshly and glaringly, repelling the gaze that it formerly gladdened. An unsupplied want oppresses the mind; a strange vacancy sickens the heart. Restless, wearied,

terrified at the newness of his position, where shall the mourner find a solace commensurate with his need? In this—"If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him." There is an immeasurable distance between submission to the cross and acceptance of it. Simon the Cyrenian, compelled to bear it, and Paul glorying in his infirmities that the power of Christ might rest on him, are the representatives of two classes whom man may confound, but who are severally discerned of God. The one bends in silent acquiescence beneath the burden that a stronger hand has fixed beyond his power to shake off: the other regards his affliction as a heaven-appointed means of bringing him to a fuller participation in what Christ's sufferings have purchased for him—even that strength proportioned to his day which is doubly precious as being a fulfilled promise. A strength that he marvels at—perhaps almost murmurs to find so mighty: for the disposition of the heart is that of Jonah, when fainting he wished in himself to die, and said, "It is better for me to die than to live." It loves to brood over the loss, to conjure up a thousand torturing phantoms of past happiness, and to contrast the present gloom with the most vivid of all the day-beams that preceded it. Under this influence, many a mind has wrought itself to frenzy, and either become a wreck—a blank in the intellectual world, or nerved the hand to the commission of a crime for which there is no repentance. No! nature does not welcome the voice that, coming with power to appease the tempest, says, "Be still, and know that I am God." Poor comfort indeed it were

to receive that message, if its purport respected only the absolute sovereignty with which he wields the power of life and death! The experience of one whose pride had been crushed into the dust of earth, and his glory changed into unexampled vileness, and who had learned to tremble before Omnipotence, suggested that sublime language, "All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" But such helpless submission to irresistible power belongs not to the Christian. To him the declaration, "I am God," comes fraught with the sweet assurance, "I am love." The hand that smote him was guided not by despotic authority, but by compassionate tenderness. He knows God as one who doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. It pleased the Lord to bruise his beloved Son: to put *Him* to grief in whom he delighted, and to deal with him as a sinner, who did no sin. And this was love—infinite, everlasting love, in its highest exercise. The Christian knows it to be so; and he is still, even in spite of the desperate struggles of corrupt nature, desiring to rebel; for in the Godhead of his Master he acknowledges the pledge of power to save to the uttermost; and he joyfully takes hold of the strength that prostrates and paralyzes another. It is an amazing work, so to subdue the will of man; and in the mightiness of its operation the mourner feels not only that his God can do all things with him, but that he, poor worm as he is, can also

do all things through Christ who strengtheneth him.

These are solemn seasons indeed, when God presents himself to the soul which he has afflicted, and says, "Lovest thou me?" And if the soul be enabled with sincerity to answer, with Peter, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee;" the stillness of spirit succeeding that colloquy, when the Lord being in his temple, all that is earthly keeps silence before him is perhaps the nearest approach to heavenly peace that his redeemed people can know while yet in the body. The heart knows that it may sorrow; that no prohibition has been uttered to stifle the voice of woe. Rachel was not chid when she wept for the children; and that grief in itself is perfectly innocent, who shall deny, when we point to the Holy One, "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," throughout the whole course of his visible abode among the sons of Adam. The stillness commanded is not that of apathy or of indifference, or of forced acquiescence: it is a patient waiting for the promised crown, while bending under the predicted cross.

The Lily of the Valley will shortly appear as tranquilly beautiful as ever, as gracefully mantled in its broad leaf, as rich in the fragrancy of its delightful perfume. And shall the feeling be denounced as unsubmitive that draws a sorrowing contrast between the gardener's acquisition and the mourner's bereavement? If so, I claim my portion of the censure; for I shall assuredly lament over it, and wish the flower that I love had been altogether blotted from the fair face of creation, so that the husband had not been

widowed, or the babe left motherless. The form and the hue that bring her with more vivid fidelity before my recollection will almost appear intrusive; for nature secretly says, ‘Why should these pale blossoms be found in their wonted station, while the place that knew her, knows her, alas! no more for ever?’ But although thus coldly greeted, the beauteous Lily will be dearer than before, for it brings a message of hope, ripening, as I contemplate it, into joy.

Last autumn I had occasion, through some changes in the arrangement of my little garden, to take up the roots of the Lily of the Valley for an hour. It was a hackneyed subject, I confess, but while looking on the small unsightly heap, as it lay at my feet, I could not but be struck anew with the wonder-working skill that was to weave such a tissue of elegance and loveliness from materials so unpromising. For the hundredth time I pondered over the nothingness of man in his best estate, supposing the uttermost of his power and craft to be expended on one of those ordinary objects. Deprived of the aid of three elements, earth, air, and water, could he, by any effort, cause it to reproduce the form that, if left to the unassisted operation of those elements, it would certainly exhibit? Impossible: he might by violence destroy the principle of vegetable life; but to call it into action, otherwise than by the way that divine wisdom had appointed, was beyond the reach of his contrivance. Glorious in creation, how much more glorious is the Lord our God in redemption! Man may reach the mainspring of his fellow’s mortal existence, and wrench it away, and

stop the complicated machinery in its course: but neither man nor Satan can approach the life of the soul, when restored by Him who first breathed into Adam's nostrils "the breath of life." Dying in Adam, made alive in Christ, he that believeth on the Son of God **HATH** everlasting life. It is a prize in possession, not in prospect—it is what no power could confer but that which in giving stamps the gift with immortality.

I buried the roots again, and smoothed over them the earth, and left a little stick to mark where I might confidently look for their re-appearance in due season. And she, the fair, the gentle Zelia, she too has been laid low beneath the surface of the ground, and the sod is growing smooth above her, and the record of lamented love distinguishes it from surrounding heaps. Many a successive crop of Lilies of the Valley may rise and bloom, fade and die, before the appointed time of her bright change shall come. But come it will; the Lord will have a desire to the work of his hands. He will call, and she will answer. Imagination cannot realize the scene, when the vile body—vile at its best estate—shall be changed like unto Christ's glorious body, and become like Him. Imagination cannot look into those glorious revelations—but faith, which is the evidence of things unseen, beholds it all. Affection itself sorrows not as being without hope: and that hope, that precious hope, steals upon the lacerated heart, sweetly whispering the promise, and bidding the mourners in Zion "comfort one another with these words."

CHAPTER V.

THE HAWTHORN.

THERE are particular seasons when memory presents the images of days and things gone by with a reality most overpowering : when a long succession of years is made to wear the aspect of a dream ; and we awake again in the society that we best loved, and from which we scarcely seem in reality to have been separated. I know not how this may affect the individual whose days have glided pleasantly along, no precious ties dissevered, no howling tempest let loose upon his path, no piercing thorns laid there to wound his feet : but the shadow of a quiet home held over him, and the smile of domestic love always ready to sweeten his needful portion of this life's bitters. I do know its touching power where all this has been reversed ; where home, sweet, native home, has never been revisited, since the almost daily sight of such friends added brightness to its very sunshine ; nor have those friends been met since home, dear home, was deserted. I know what it is, when years of varied trial have been so prolonged that the girl and the stripling of those times can shew their daughters and their sons

grown up almost to their own stature ; and to indifferent eyes, a change has passed upon all, well nigh sufficient to destroy personal identity. But though the eye admits a change, the heart does not. Its language is, ‘This is the same, the very same, the youthful guest my father loved to welcome, the chosen companion of my brother’s sportive hours ; the associate of many a sunshiny day, the abettor of many a mirthful scheme—in one word, a part and parcel of my own, my early HOME.’ Upon that English monosyllable, more perhaps has been said and sung, written and recited, than on any other word in the language ; but when all is added up together, it falls far short in eloquent description, of what is contained in a single smile, in one look of cordial recognition, from an old, and dear, and long-lost friend of our early home.

It seems strange that where all the dispensations of God’s providence, however mysterious, and seemingly severe, are not only known and acknowledged, but *felt* to have been working together for good, and where no possible portion of unmixed and prolonged earthly happiness would bribe the believer to become again what he was in those by-gone years, their recollection should be still so very sweet, so very precious to the heart. Yet it is in full accordance with the spirit of our just and comprehensive form of thanksgiving, where we bless our heavenly Father “for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life.” Even in the days of spiritual darkness and thankless alienation from God, his hand was over us for good : he caused his sun to shine, and his rain to

fall, for our enjoyment : and, in the eternal purposes of his saving mercy to the objects of redeeming love, as in the case of Cyrus, he girded us, although we did not know him. I cannot think that there is anything displeasing to God, or injurious to spiritual feeling, in thus cherishing the memory of the past : sure I am that it is calculated to stir us up to earnest, mutual prayer, one for another ; and when we think on the many who are taken, the few who survive, the number of years that have slipped by unimproved, and the awful uncertainty of what remains, we cannot stifle the solemn call to “ work while it is called to-day : for the night cometh.”

Night has indeed come—has fallen at noon—on some whose morning was as cloudless and as sweet as that of the loveliest day in spring. It cannot be that I should now refrain from once more reverting to the dearest recollection of my heart, to one who was so truly a sharer in all its thoughts, its troubles and its joys, that when, as now, the picture, or rather the reality of those early days has been vividly held up to my sight, as it seems a marvel to me that I should be enabled to acquiesce in the dispensation that so abruptly removed him. A long and anxious quest among the hawthorn hedges, even in the sunniest spots, sent me back unsuccessful. The flower of May had not ventured to expose its delicate and fragile clusters to so uncongenial an atmosphere ; but though the disappointment saddened me, I am content that the flower of May should become a flower of June ; and the simple chaplet long since chosen to

commemorate the day of his birth, be transferred by a short delay, to honour the day of his death.

I like not the indiscriminate application of that word: where the sting of death is taken away, its character is changed. How beautiful is the expression used in reference to Stephen—"And when he had thus spoken, he fell asleep." The dissolution of the body after the spirit has left it becomes needful; and there is mercy, seldom considered and acknowledged, in what we naturally abhor to think of. Did the body remain entire we could not, at this period of the world, strike a spade into the ground without invading the sanctuary of its ghastly inhabitants; and every populous place must, after a few generations, be deserted from mere want of space wherein to deposit them, with any regard to the common feelings of decency and natural respect. Terrible, indeed, and horrible would be the penal sentence, if, in returning to the dust, the body did not also become dust. Some, to be sure can so far afford and contrive to evade the common doom, as to brick up their departed friends in vaults, a miserable exemption to the general rule. At least, so I regard it; I prefer a sanctuary that is inviolable, because altogether undiscoverable, save to the eye of God alone. His people "fall asleep," and then, if man interpose not, he "hides them," by a wonderful process, where none can find them again, until at the great consummation of all things, in the exquisitely sublime words of Job, which the believer may confidently take up, "Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the

work of thine hands." Yes, I love to think that in putting the mortal remains of a precious object into the ground, I do especially commit them to the Lord, allowing him to work his wondrous and gracious will, unmaking what he made; re-uniting it with the element from which it was taken, and reserving to himself the glory of gathering again such particles as shall enter into the formation of the spiritual body, from what was the habitation of the soul during its former stage of existence. I sometimes think that very few do really and rightly believe in that splendid miracle, the *resurrection* of the body: the actual rising again of *the* body which is buried: the appearance of men in *their* bodies before the judgment-seat of Christ. It is too wonderful for us; we cannot attain unto it: but we are not therefore excused from believing it.

This blossom—this cluster of flowers, each robed in delicate white, with a faint blush of equally delicate rose-colour, and studded with a perfect grove of graceful stamens, breathing a fragrance deliciously in unison with its exquisite appearance—this hawthorn blossom—whence came it? Last year, a mound of clay was piled up along the side of the field, to form a bank, into which was inserted a row of as unsightly sticks as could well be seen: and I know that at the root of the stick decomposition took place, and nothing was there but black earth, cold damps, and vegetable corruption. Yet it can be proved to demonstration that from them arose this object, glorious in the perfection of visible beauty, without a trace of the combination of disagreeable things whence it sprang.

I know that instrumentally the sun in the firmament, and the balmy air of spring, wrought the change : and shall I concede to the weak creatures of an Almighty Hand, a power which I deny to that unrestrained Omnipotence ? No, most lovely preacher ; my heart is not so closed against the delicious promise, illustrated by such a type ; and while the Lord in his word says to me, " Thy brother shall rise again," no less surely does he, in his work, shew me that what shall rise is the same in very deed, yet with a body given to it of the glory of which we can form no more conception than he who had never beheld a flower could have formed of what should spring from the stick thrust into the ground last year.

With this in prospect, I can venture, yea, delight to look back ; and while fondly dwelling on the early scenes of our thoughtless days, can say of each, it was a link in the chain of endless mercies wrought by everlasting love. If the strength of undivided affection adds a pang to the keen sense of irreparable loss, still the good far overbalances the evil. It led to willing service and to fervent prayer, while either could avail him : it infuses zeal and perseverance into duties fulfilled for his sake, and in his stead, towards objects once most dear to his heart. There is scarcely a recollection interwoven with the flower of May that does not furnish an encouragement, and feed the hope which maketh not ashamed, by opening more and more the faithfulness of him who hath promised. Is the contemplation one of early enjoyment, unmingled with a tear, unchecked by a frown, when all went well

with me even as, in the blindness of the natural heart, I desired it to be? I read in that retrospection the necessity for subsequent chastisement, and learn to adore the love that followed me through every perverse and wilful track, applying the scourge, until the wanderer, brought home to the fold, desired to stray no more. Does the image of my companion rise before me, in all the countless combinations that cannot be forgotten? I ponder on the mercy that watched and warded every danger and led him through the successive battle fields of a protracted warfare, untouched by hostile arm, while many a comrade fell before his eyes, and armies were mowed down beside him. A work was to be wrought in him, and God would glorify himself, alike by prolonging life in the midst of hourly perils, and by terminating it in the moment of peace and security. The artist's skill is never so highly appreciated as when he has succeeded in portraying an object beloved by ourselves: should not the glorious workmanship of the Most High call forth a song of louder praise, when his renewing power has stamped with the impress of immortal life a soul naturally dear to us as our own? We should not hear so many idle changes rung on the perverted word idolatry, as applied to the indulgence of our natural affection—or, at least, we should not so much heed them,—if we marked the stimulus thereby given to intercessory prayer, and thankful acknowledgment on behalf of our brethren. “Oh, that Ishmael might live before thee!” was the ejaculation of parental love; and at the end of more than thirty-six centuries we see the still unconquered

Arab enjoying the fulfilment of God's gracious answer to that prayer.

Fearfully and wonderfully made as we are in every respect, there is nothing more astonishing to me than the phenomena of memory. An event occurs, or a remark is made, and for years the circumstance is forgotten: it seems to be utterly blotted out and consigned to oblivion, but it remains, with all its associations, so faithfully preserved that when unexpectedly recalled it comes not alone—it brings a host of touching recollections, aggravating, perhaps, the bitterness of loss, while it soothes the bereaved bosom by adding to its store of ideal treasures, and melancholy delights. The only things that we seem able utterly to forget are God's mercies and our own sins; for all beside, we have a ready place in that amazing organ, memory.

I cannot put the hawthorn blossom by for any flower that blows. Its very profusion endears it, meeting me in every path with a joyous smiling aspect, like that which it commemorates; and marking the most beautiful season of the year, and disappearing when all seems to promise a long reign of flowers. And what shall supply its place? The wild-rose of the hedge is fair, but too evanescent; the straggling honey-suckle is sweet, but it wants the sprightly grace of the May-flower. I must not repine, surrounded by so many varied gifts of the same bounteous hand, because one is taken away: but though I may not repine, I cannot forget. The Lord gave, and I blessed his name for it: he resumed the boon, and I was able to bless him

for that also, because I knew it to be best, since he willed it; and I knew also that he took away, not cast away, the treasure of my heart. It was not scattered to the wind like the petals of a flower, but gathered into the garner as winnowed wheat, reserved for the Master's use. Can we look abroad upon this world of storms, and regret that our harvest is safely housed? Can we hear the frequent voice of sorrow and of sighing, and lament that some beloved object has gained the place where they are compelled to flee away? The ripening berries of the hawthorn bush, reserved as a winter store to feed the little birds of heaven, read a lesson from the very stalks where those sweet blossoms smiled. They tell me of a nobler purpose in the works of God than selfish man would appoint: and the small portion of his ways that we may now discern is but a part of that vast and uniform design which shall, hereafter, be fully unfolded, to the joy of his people and the glory of his name.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WHITE CLOVER.

“THE voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as a flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever.”

No language but that of inspiration can suitably express the swelling emotion of the heart when a poor child of dust looks round on the scene of death's hourly devastations, and feels that the scythe has just cropped away some one of *his* most cherished blossoms. There is but One of whom it can be fully said, He knows what is in man: we are riddles to each other, and paradoxes to ourselves. That which was created for eternity, became in its most perceptible part, mortal: that which was formed light, now invaded by gross darkness, that which was made a dwelling of love and peace, now transformed into a battle-field of perpetual hatred and strife—may well be a source of perplexity to its own clouded and be-

wildered faculties in any state. The more so, perhaps, when the day-spring from on high breaks in again to scatter the resisting darkness: when the dove of peace once more spreads her brooding wing over the scene of conflict, and partially hushes the storm: when the gate of a blessed immortality is thrown wide in the distance, and the spirit enabled to gaze upon its home struggles, and gradually prevails over the fleshly impulse that cannot but cling to earth. There was a time when body and spirit together served God, rejoicing in their happy union, under his forming hand, a time when earth with all that it contained, lay basking in the smile of its Almighty King, or moved in undeviating obedience to his divine will. And when on a bright spring morning in freshness of health and bouyancy of spirit, I walk abroad, warmed by the chastened beam, fanned by the light and fragrant breeze, while the little wild flower laughs from among the meadow grass, the yellow butterfly sports before me, the bee pursues her cheerful way, and birds rejoicing flutter through the branches that extend once more their screen of delicate foliage, I cannot quite realize the awful truth that man is a rebel, and the earth a blighted thing: that, spite of this hour's enchantment, the whole creation groans and travails in pain together; and that if even my bodily sight could penetrate to the distance of a few short miles around, I should behold such scenes of crime, of sorrow, and of death, as would divest of all its charms the narrow circuit of my present contemplation; and compel me to exclaim under the fullest impression of its hu-

miliation, defilement, and fragility, "Surely the people is grass!"

There is a class of good persons who too readily condemn what God has in no instance denounced. They not only disapprove the expression of admiration and delight, in surveying the perishable but still most lovely and glorious wreck of what was once so perfect and so good—they censure the indulgence of warm attachment to the fellow-pilgrims who are passing like us through the clouded and polluted scene, to the rest which remaineth for the people of God. Ardent love for our friends is not unfrequently stigmatized as idolatry; and the chill of an unjust rebuke is thrown heavily on a warm heart, beating with the impulse of sanctified affection. Against such numbing influences I always did, and always will, in thought, word, and deed, maintain an uncompromising protest, confirmed by spiritual precept and example. I know I am not to set my affections on things on the earth, that is, on the perishing things of time, which are destined to vanish away; but I am yet to learn that a child of God, whose soul is sealed with the promise of eternal life, whose body is made the temple of the living God now, and destined to be changed hereafter into the likeness of Christ's glorious body, and made a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem—I am yet to learn that such a one is a thing of earth whereon I must not set my affections; if words are to be taken in so literal a sense, as to bar all reference to the spirit of their meaning—if all "things on the earth" are to be excluded from our affections, we must

take heed lest we love our bibles too well, or value too highly those means of grace which necessarily consist of visible, audible, and tangible things. The fact is that some individuals are of cool temperament, their feelings not so easily drawn out, nor their sympathies so readily awakened as those of a different class. These are apt unconsciously to form a standard by their private interpretation of scripture; and to make the measure of their individual experience the rule for judging others. They consider as extravagant, fanciful, and enthusiastic, the fervency of attachment of which they are not themselves capable: and often check or at least ruffle, the flow of those kindly affections which form the richest sweetness of, perhaps a sea of bitters, in the lot of their more ardent friends. When I meet with these sage reprovers, I let them say what they please and make little reply, if any: for I well know that it would be an idle task to argue with a blind man on the comparative beauty of colours. They cannot make me angry; because when they tax me with a wilful excess I recognize in them an involuntary defect, beyond my power to supply. Therefore I leave them to take the way that pleases them, and with renewed enjoyment pursue my own.

Not one of these was my beloved Anne S. Never did the warm current of devoted affection more freely bound through the veins of an Irish heart than in hers. Throughout a lot of trial such as few are called on to encounter, she was upheld by such experimental enjoyment of her Redeemer's love to her his chosen child, that, loving her brethren as she knew the Lord

loved her, according to his own gracious commandment, her sanctified affections went forth like sunbeams, glowing more ardently nearest the centre of their home, but warming and brightening withersoever they could reach. Dear, dear Anne S. ! Short indeed was our permitted intercourse here ; but it is soothing to my inmost spirit to know, that as fervently as two poor creatures of dust could love, so fervently did we, by the grace of God, love one another.

If my types were always characteristic of their object, and I sought to do justice to Anne, I might look among the cedars of Lebanon, or the palm-tree of the east for some fitting emblem of her elevated mind, her superior attainments, and overshadowing guardianship of those who clustered around her. But lowliness was the prevailing trait in my gifted friend : and often as I traced the passionate love of her warm heart for the land of her birth, I almost regretted that the shamrock was already dedicated to my precious dumb boy ; and in my thought I likened her to another and more intrinsically valuable member of the same family. My young and happy days were passed much in the field ; and there I had, and still have, an especial favourite among the flowers that gem the grass. Though little esteemed, because little marked, the blossom of the White Clover may vie in beauty and in fragrance with many a proud tenant of our cultivated gardens. Often have I stooped to gather the elegant globe, as it rose from its cluster of green trefoil, and after inhaling the perfume of its united cups, I have drawn them one by one, from their stalk,

to suck the abundant store of honey concealed in each recess. I could not point out an individual among the flowers combining so much of elegance and usefulness—so pleasant to the eye of taste, so prized by the hand that only seeks for profit: and withal so clad in lowliness, so quietly bending beneath the foot of pride, so calmly lifting up again its gentle head in undefiled simplicity to heaven.

And in default of genuine shamrocks, I have seen the clover, as a trefoil, pressed to the lips of this dear exile of Erin, while every feature bespoke the deep and varying emotions recalled by that action. An exile she was—a willing, though a sorrowing exile, and I cannot retrace the briefest outline of her touching story without a struggle of feelings in which indignation would fain predominate. Who does not know how great have been the trials of Ireland's persecuted clergy? Few indeed know *what* they have been; but that they have been great, very great and bitter, none among us are ignorant. Anne was the eldest of a motherless family, every heart twining round the surviving parent with all the fondness of intense filial attachment—with all the reverence due to a devoted minister of the gospel of Christ. Their early years were those of prosperity in worldly things: and accomplishments of no common order were added to what the God of nature had given—what the God of grace had renewed and sanctified. In the fond father, as in a centre, all their earthly affections met: and his delight it was to point them to a higher aim. Happy, most happy for them, that so he did—it is now

their richest solace under reiterated bereavements. I may not enter too fully into the hallowed precincts of such a home as theirs : It must suffice to say that the general distress fell heavily upon it : but more in anticipation than in the immediate presence. With the foresight and self-devotion peculiar to her character, Anne marked the thickening cloud ; she called her sisters around her ; and together, in prayer, they decided on a plan which was not made known to their father until the very eve of its execution. It was, that all, save one in extremely delicate health, and another yet as a child among them, should become self-exiled from their pleasant home together ; and by diligently using, for a time, the gifts acquired under very different circumstances, they should contribute to sustain in comparative comfort the diminished circle thus left around the domestic hearth. ‘Little,’ said Anne to me, ‘little did my darling father suspect the reason of my diligent study of botany ; or, when he saw me delighted at the award of the medal won by my proficiency, that my joy arose from knowing that it added a feather in the scale of those poor accomplishments which were to augment my salary—devoted to his future comforts !’ Under circumstances most touching, the event took place ; and these heroic daughters together tore themselves from the home where they hoped to re-assemble in more prosperous days. I cannot dwell upon the scene ; I saw it not, save in her vivid description ; but I felt it to my heart’s core.

Anne’s destination was England. Hither she came,

and with earnest assiduity applied herself to the task of tuition. Her uncommon acquirements insured a handsome salary, and joyously did she calculate on the service it would render to her father—how fondly she loved that father cannot be conceived even by this act of self-surrender—how agonizing was her trial, is known alone to Him, who in mysterious wisdom sent a stroke so sudden, that all the frantic haste that poor Anne could make to her distant home availed not to show her more than the mound that covered her father's new-made grave.

The blow upon her tender heart was mortal. The struggles of her renewed spirit to sustain the load were wonderful; but they availed not. Back she returned to her post; for though the beloved parent was gone, there were others now cast especially on her to provide for. It was soon after her return, that, finding I was in her vicinity, and doing justice to the love which I bear her dear country, she left her card at my door, inscribed with her name, and the brief addition, 'an Irishwoman.' We soon met; and I could not but marvel at the strength of the mutual affection that seemed, even from the first moment, to unite us. To me she was a treasure: her simple, sweet, undeviating trust in the Lord Jesus, her quiet submission under the heavy afflictions laid on her, the clear, realizing view which she took of spiritual things, and her habitual reference to the Lord's will in even the most minute matters—all rendered her a continual study to me, for my own humiliation and profit. In the ex-

cess of her love for dear Ireland I could fully sympathize : and in the cherished remembrance of scenes gone by, and loved ones lost, I found one who could indeed most deeply sympathize with me. The inexhaustible stores of her mind, her fine taste, accurate judgment, and delicate sense of honour, were beautiful to contemplate. Of the last she gave a touching proof ; for when, smitten suddenly by a paralytic affection through the intenseness of her mental struggles, she expected instant or speedy death, she made a powerful effort to commit to the flames all my letters and little notes. Often had I expressed to her my abhorrence of the want of principle and feeling exhibited in the too-common practice of exposing private letters, whether of the living or the dead ; denouncing the former as base and treacherous—the latter as doubly treacherous and doubly base. She laid it to heart : and even at that awful moment collected her bewildered faculties to secure, as she afterwards told me, my little billets from falling into any other hands. I know she dearly prized them, even as I now treasure her beautiful letters to me : and it was a striking evidence at once of delicacy and fidelity, which few, perhaps, would imitate, because not many possess that exquisite sense of which she was continually giving proofs. If I knew of one among my many friends who could be capable of publishing to the world the unstudied effusions of epistolary intercourse, I should turn from that individual with a bitter regret that ever we became acquainted. The act of Anne S. was no

more than strict integrity demanded, as she herself observed to me, yet would every Christian have viewed the duty, and fulfilled it like her? I fear not.

It pleased the Lord to raise her up from this attack, so far as to admit of her return to Ireland, with a fair prospect of ultimate recovery. Our parting interview cannot be effaced from my recollection. She was unable to attend the ordinances of God's house, and her affectionate pastor administered to her, four days before her departure hence, the comfortable institution of our dying Lord. I was the privileged partaker; and precious to my soul is the remembrance of that hour! As she lay upon the couch, her tall slender form, wrapped in the sable weeds of deepest mourning, her altered, but ever eloquent features wearing the expression of such perfect peace as I have rarely beheld on any countenance, her joined hands meekly resting on her bosom, pointing upwards, and the very tear that trembled on the lash of her closed eyes, withheld from falling, as though absorbed by a beam of holy joy, I felt that she was not a creature of earth—not destined long to sojourn among us: and though my heart selfishly ached at the prospect of my loss, I could not wish it otherwise.

Immediately after we were left alone, and while her thoughts were evidently still in heaven, she drew forth from a little pocket book the dearest relic she possessed—a pair of bands, just as they had been worn by her beloved parent in his last ministrations; and a lock of silvery hair. Not one word accompanied the action; nor was it needed; her tears burst forth: but

with a solemn awe-struck expression she lifted her eyes to heaven, and they were stayed. And when I whispered, 'It is but a little, a very little while, and you, darling, will be rejoicing too before the throne where he now is,' her whole countenance glowed with delight, as she repeated 'A very, very little while.' We parted, and the Lord only knows with what feelings of lingering affection the farewell was again and again renewed. She went: a stormy passage brought her to a quiet haven in her own sweet isle: and very soon was her soul at anchor in the calm and beautiful harbour of eternal rest.

It was not expected: she was apparently recovering, and all looked as bright as to the bereaved hearts of that orphaned family earthly things could look. Anne had supplied a mother's place to them: and to see her once more among them was almost like the return of a parent from the dead. But her gentle heart was broken: she had drunk the cup—she had fought the good fight, had finished her course, had kept the faith, and her crown was ready. She rose one morning, dressed herself, and then, overcome by fatigue, lay down on her bed, and was heard to say, 'My heavenly Father's hour is come.' After an interval, the word 'Peace, peace,' was softly and repeatedly breathed from lips on which the spirit of peace and law of kindness had ever dwelt. She fell asleep as it seemed, and a sleep it was, in Jesus, from which the body should no more awake till the voice of the Archangel calls it from the grave, a glorious thing, to be re-united to the rejoicing soul.

I wander now along the paths where we have walked, recalling with melancholy delight her animated looks, her powerful thoughts, and the elegant language in which she clad them : or I sit in the very place where her countenance used to shine upon my laborious, and somewhat painful hours, remembering the pang that often shot across her speaking features, betraying the grief within, until I can rejoice, disinterestedly, fully rejoice in the assurance that she sorrows no more, but follows, in his heavenly pastures, the Lamb, whom so sweetly she followed in the path of suffering below. I cannot but miss her, while the bursting foliage of spring restores to my pleasant haunts the aspect that we together delighted to behold : and I never shall be able to set my foot upon the fair pale flower profusely spread in the path. I must watch its growth ; and when in its blooming prime it falls beneath the mower's cythe on the same bright day, to be gathered into the storehouse for winter provision, I shall love it better still. For though "the grass withereth, the flower fadeth," it is but to place in more sublime contrast that which "shall stand for ever." And this peculiar species, lovely and pleasant in life, becomes more valuable when cut down ; ministering nourishment to God's creatures. Even so, my beloved Anne S., who rendered many an hour delightful while the warm pulse of her affectionate heart sent life and animation through her frame, now when that quiet frame moulders in dust, yields food to my soul, while, contemplating her faith, her patience, her endurance and ever-glowing love, I behold the fruits of a real union with

Christ, the living Vine, and long to follow her, even as she followed the Saviour here ; that like her I may at last attain to the blessedness laid up in Him for all who believe. For He has said, "whosoever believeth in me hath eternal life;" and "the word of our God shall stand for ever."

CHAPTER VII.

THE WALL-FLOWER.

AMONG the hardy flowers that scarcely need more than a passing gleam of watery sunshine to tempt them forth, is one of which from early childhood most of us have taken notice. For me it bears a charm in it, composed of such varied ingredients that I hardly know how to define it. I never cast my eye upon the Wall-flower, but a long chain of indistinct recollections and half-formed associations seems to awaken, or, more properly speaking, to lull me into a sort of dream, understood by those, and perhaps those alone, whose early haunts have been among the crumbling relics of remote national antiquity, and their chosen contemplation the stirring events of England's former days. Of all the vegetable world I have found this common flower my pleasantest companion in such scenes; and the readiest to unlock those stores of fancy which, although in my estimation they have yielded to more important things, will yet, subordinately but sweetly, harmonize with holier themes. I am not, I never was, and devoutly hope that I never shall be, one of those who decry as narrow-minded or illiberal the burning glow

of patriotic feeling; or who would own no national preference in spiritual things. Foreign languages, manners and fashions have greatly tended to deteriorate the good old English spirit that once prevailed among us; and, as for our twin-sister, poor Ireland, we are compelled to give heed to her present claims, and to turn an anxious eye to her disordered shores, because we have given our ancient enemy such a vantage ground there as to keep us in a state of restless observation, surveying their manœuvres; but of her old chronicles, the thrilling tales connected with her stately castles, her decaying fortresses and mysterious towers, we are still deplorably ignorant. Whence comes this deadened feeling in what regards our island domain? I know not; I only know that my nationality is very strong, and that I rarely meet with any one who seems thoroughly to sympathize in it; who will grasp as a treasure an old coin, however defaced by the handling of many succeeding generations, which bears the stamp of England, or Ireland, or of Scotland, and find a volume within its narrow compass; or who will pace like me the site of some ancient palace or dilapidated hall, touched by emotions that the mighty ruins of Rome herself could not call forth.

But I am rarely alone in imagination, which at such times is all but a reality; for I generally find the wall-flower there, striking its tenacious root into any narrow crevice, and waving its streaked flag above the ruins. There is peculiarly in the single, wild sort, a character so bold and free, so lively and determined, that, combined with the delight it seems to take in

breathing perfume round the old forsaken ruin, whose grey brow it decorates with a wreath of green and gold, the flower alone would suffice for a companion, seeming to say, as it meets my look, 'Let who will pass them by, we love the wrecks of our dear country's olden time: let who may forget, we cherish the remembrance of her gallant struggles, her mighty deliverances, and all that her God hath done in her for his own glory, and for her preparation as a chosen lamp to shed the light of truth over a darkened world.' There was a time when the chivalry of England alone engrossed my thoughts: her magnificence at home, and her puissance abroad: her character, grasped by mailed hands at Runnymede, her bannered lion, borne upon the plain of Cressy or of Agincourt; the outgoings of her naval armaments, to prepare the way for planting her forests of commercial masts in every distant port: and even her domestic wars, her castles stormed by kindred hands, when the wild clamour of feudal strife was heard amid her shires, and the private bickerings of rival barons could be stilled but in the death-cries of their faithful serfs.

And all this is well remembered yet: but all appears one mighty march, by slow, and painful, and circuitous steps, towards the summit of her true glory: all wrought, though the actors knew it not, nor desired nor dreamed it—all wrought to make her what she still is, PROTESTANT—the land of the Bible.

But has the Wall-flower no individual reference like any other sweet companion of the garden? Indeed it has: intimately it is connected with the re-

membrance of one who has long lain entombed beneath the towering walls of as stately, as superb, and interesting a relic of our early architecture, as could well be found in England. She it was who certainly instilled into my infant mind the first principle of patriotic feeling. It glowed within her own breast with an ardour that neither age could chill nor the indifference of others discourage. I love to recall the hours when, having perhaps brought from my father's extensive garden a sprig of the Wall-flower—I knew it was her favourite shrub—to replenish the little jar of sweets that she loved to arrange, I leaned my elbows on her knee, and caught from her lips the clear and animated chaunt with which she gave forth the famous ballad of Chevy Chase. There was a lovely one beside me—never were he and I found apart; and we together joined our little voices to that of our delighted instructress; whose colour, always high, would be ruddier, her uncommonly bright hazle eyes assuming an additional sparkle, and her neck rising more perpendicular from the old-fashioned bodice that supported it, when she took up the stanza,

The first that did him answer make,
Was noble Percy, he,
Who said, 'We list not to declare,
Nor show whose men we be.'

In fact the dear old lady prided herself not a little on a direct descent by the female side from that redoubtable earl: while collaterally she could claim kith and kin with not a few of England's gallant 'squires; and dwelling in a cottage, contented with

the simplest fare, utterly indifferent to all that others deemed so tempting of this world's pomp and pleasure, she rejoiced in her pedigree, and did her best to infuse her genuine patriotism into the second generation of her children, as successfully as in some instances she had done into the first.

But this was not all; there was more which then I understand not, nor could any around me have done so. She had a dearer feeling than her patriotism; a richer treasure than her pedigree. Seldom, if ever, did I visit her little abode without finding her engrossed with a study that seemed the abiding joy of her heart. An old Bible was constantly on her lap; and many things she said to us concerning its blessed truths, of which I do not retain one distinct recollection; but I know that some of the most sublime, awakening and deeply spiritual passages of God's book were first pointed out to me by her aged finger, enforced by a remark which was little heeded by us, for we wanted what we thought better amusement. For some years before childhood was passed, the place of our abode was changed, and we could rarely see her, as the distance was several miles: but again we were brought within a nearer proximity; and at times I felt a growing interest in the theme which I now am sure was nearest to her heart. But I did not freely express this: and she, accustomed to be perfectly alone, if not openly opposed in these matters, was timid in bringing them forward. It was not long ere her grave was dug within the noble quadrangle of the cathedral where she loved to worship: and so in death, as in her life,

is the remembrance of this venerable relative interwoven with those thoughts wherein the wild sweet wall-flower seems so fully to sympathize that it is part and parcel of the whole.

Often have I considered the touching case of those aged pilgrims who, towards the close of a long day, first perceive a beam of light on their weary road. It does happen often that the eyes of all belonging to such a one being yet sealed in impenetrable darkness, the avowals made as to that gladdening beam are received with derision, or at best, with a pitying incredulity that tends painfully to repel the overflowings of a joyful heart, and to close the lip of praise so far as man is concerned. But more frequently, in our day of very flourishing head-knowledge, it is the lot of the simple trusting soul that has just learned to lay hold on eternal life by faith in Christ Jesus, to be perplexed and harassed, and cast down by the high assumption of some who are ready, if not to despise the day of small things, at least to add a great deal to the plain and sweet assurance, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." It is often required of those who are resting on this word, and rejoicing in a hope that maketh not ashamed, that they should receive a certain set of doctrines, and attain to a certain degree of what is considered maturity in faith, before they are allowed to feel themselves in the haven of spiritual rest. I have often grieved, bitterly grieved, to witness this idle, and I will say unscriptural teasing of the minds and consciences of others: but never so much as when the party thus held at bay is an aged

traveller, whose shadow is fast lengthening, and whose trembling limbs demand a strong prop, as they approach the precipice. My dearest study, my most delightful and invigorating exercise, (after communion with God in his word, and by prayer,) has been among the records of our English confessors and martyrs: and although I find, here and there, a divine who had searched into the deep mysteries of God, yet I recognize, in by far the greater number of his glorified ones, the most simple, single reliance on God as a Father, on Christ as a Redeemer, and on the Holy Spirit as a Teacher and comforter, without an attempt to proceed further than this, and the great test of a renewed heart—holiness of life. We are now splitting daily into new parties: each one hath a doctrine, hath an interpretation; and makes his own notions the standard of his neighbour's faith. It was not so, when the militant church had external, visible foes to contend with: these are intestine commotions, arising from too much ease and fulness of bread, and a superabundance of spiritual pride. I withdraw from them in pain and disgust; and with the little sprightly Wall-flower unfolding its blossoms in the garden beside me, I follow in thought the course of its many-featured family, until my mind rests on the inhabitant of some deserted ruin, garnishing the wall where tapestry once spread its gorgeous surface; breathing its fragrance silently, where music often filled the now roofless space, and costly perfume loaded the confined air: but where perhaps some heart beat high in holy resolve to brave the loudest of Rome's thunder, and

the fiercest of her murderous fires, strong in the faith that is in Christ Jesus ; knowing, and desiring to know only Him, and Him crucified ; and leaving all the subtle points of disputation to others.

There is one thing that Satan especially hates : he hates to see us working, when we have ceased from attaching the slightest meritorious value to what we do. He raises a shout of legality, and tries to frighten us into the shades of inert contemplation. He cannot hinder the Lord from lighting our candle, but he often contrives to clap a bushel over it, woven, perchance, of scripture-texts, which were given for a very different purpose. Oh that we were less ignorant of his devices ; more guarded when he transforms himself into an angel of light !

I am not wandering from the Wall-flower and its associations ; I am thinking of some who could have warned, have taught, have strengthened me, by the word of timely exhortation, had they not been too selfishly wrapped up in individual enjoyment of that which God never gave to be enjoyed alone. Many a stroke of the rod might then have been spared, which fell most heavily upon the uninstructed wanderer : and the case is by no means a singular one. I do not here cast a reproach on that venerable individual who lives in a warm though somewhat dusky recess of my heart : she, I know, did what she could ; and she had her own cross to bear as a poor hungry sheep, who looked up, and was not fed by man's hand. Egypt was not darker during its days of supernatural visitation, than was the place of her abode in a spiritual

sense. She had the beautiful, the rich, and the divinely-scriptural liturgy of our church, and dearly did she love it: she had the abundant portions of God's word contained in its daily service, and devoutly did she listen to them under the vaulted roof of that noble pile: but from its pulpit, though supplied by a constant variety of teachers, she heard not the glad tidings of salvation by the blood of Christ. No social meeting for prayer and mutual edification supplied the lack of public preaching: no kindred spirit was found, as I think, to cheer her quiet home with the voice of individual faith and love: but she had her Bible, she read it, she loved it, she prayed over it; and lonely mariner as she was on a wide and perplexing sea, that chart was her guide to the blessed haven of eternal life. I doubt not this.

It is very affecting to behold the generations of mankind ripened, then decaying, and silently dropping away into an unseen world. There are very many of whom I can say

How are they blotted from the things that be!
How few, all weak and withered in their force,
Wait on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
To sweep them from our sight.

It is a dying world: a world of such incessant change, that as well might I set my affections on the tints of the gathered flower, now fading and shriveling in my hand, as on any thing that draws mortal breath. A scythe, invisible to us, is moving in its appointed circuit, and we know not how many of our own choicest blossoms lie within that doomed space.

It is never idle ; day and night, summer and winter, on the snows of Lapland, and beneath the burning zone—in the glittering court, amid the festive party, through the low and peaceful cottage, and over the wide waves of the mighty main—it moves, it ever moves, slaying its ten thousands as it goes. I have seen, not its movement, for that is visible only to God—but its effects. I have seen the flowers that best I loved, that adorned my own little spot of home, in the morning green and growing up, and in the evening cut down, dried up, and withered. Yea, in a literal morning and evening ; while, far and near, among kindsfolks, friends and acquaintance, the living are out-numbered by the dead.

It is an awful contemplation ; and the voice that comes from a multitude of swelling mounds is not to be disregarded. It speaks of what remains above earth's surface, and cries "Vanity of vanities : all is vanity." It utters the word of admonition, "What is your life ? is it not a vapour that passeth away ?" It tells of hope and triumph to the believer, "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die—this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality—O Death where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ?" It pleads for the living, to whom this hope is yet unknown : "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might ; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest."

Surely the Wall-flower that overtops the crumbling ruin of what was once magnificent in beauty, and all

but impregnable in strength, may sweetly typify the assured hope of glory, fixing its roots in the very corruption of that which it adorns, and blooming there because all else has ceased to shine. Natural strength has departed, original beauty is for ever gone : but the wind blowing where it listed has wafted a seed to a spot, and God has nourished it with many a soft and silent fall of dew. It succeeds all other glories, and surpasses them all ; for the former things which have passed away were man's poor workmanship, and were dead in the season of their loftiest pride ; whereas the lovely visitant that has occupied their place, has an excellence never known to them—it lives—it grows ; for it was planted by the Lord.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STONE CROP, OR THE WIDOW'S TALE.

To write on Flowers appears no difficult task, when the whole earth teeming with them presents one gorgeous carpet of rich dyes and exquisite design. On the present occasion it is only difficult from the overpowering emotion that accompanies the contemplation—the bewildering delight with which I look abroad upon the glowing scene. The flowers are scattered around me in wild profusion, always sweet, always pleasant to my eye: how much more so now, when every one that I look on has its root fixed in the green sod of dear Erin, and the welcome which they smile upon me is the ‘*ceadmille-failthe*’ of that hospitable land! Years have rolled by in lengthened exile, until I verily thought I was never more to gaze upon her fair fields, never more to taste the balmy breath of her zephyrs—but, thrown at a long distance, to love her and to work for her alone. It is not so. I am feasting in all the luxury that my heart can desire: her magnificent mountains rise before me, in endless gradations of height, form, and distance, shutting me in, as it were, a most willing captive, dreading nothing

but deliverance from my beautiful prison. The long hedge-row stretches away, where the golden furze retains many a cluster of bright blossoms, intermingled with a profusion of honey-suckle, wild-roses, and the ever-precious flower of May, which seems to have lingered thus long to add an endearment to my welcome. The stately fox-glove rising from the bank below, intersperses its rich depth of tint, while the smaller flowers that lie basking in the beam actually defy enumeration. Then the pure, cold, emerald green, mantling the earth beyond; the lovely abundance of delicate foliage in some wooded spots, the deep, steady flow of the majestic Slaney, as it widens towards the sea; the mighty relics of sterner days, frowning, even in ruin, defiance from their rocky heights; all these, and much more have combined to fill my spirit with an enjoyment that derives its highest zest from the consciousness that it is upon Erin my eye rests, and the tear of delight that often dims it, springs from a source unknown to any but those, who have learned to love and to mourn over her as I have done.

Alas! who can love her, and not mourn? Ireland is, in natural beauty, the garden of Eden: in the spiritual desolation of her native race, a howling wilderness. Look on the former, and all is harmonious loveliness, towering sublimity, unequalled grace: examine the latter, and your heart will quail before the horrors of that midnight gloom which wraps the souls and perverts the minds of her children. I speak of those who lie beneath the yoke of bondage, beguiled by the

mystery of iniquity ; the miserable tools of an incendiary priesthood, taught to saturate the earth which bears them with the blood of their best friends, and to resist, as an intolerable evil, the only sure means of their temporal and eternal welfare.

The tales that are told of scenes yet fresh in the memory of some in almost every village are harrowing : and, in illustration of this, I will relate a story, exactly as I received it on the spot where the event occurred. It has added another to my reminiscences, calculated to stir up the most sluggish spirit on behalf of these deluded beings whom the present policy of infatuated England is delivering over, in ten-fold helplessness and hopelessness, to the grasp of the destroyer.

I had long wished to visit the spot where, through God's mercy, the terrible rebellion of the year 1798 was stayed, though at a fearful cost of life ; and the priest-led troops of insurgents utterly routed had abandoned the field, never again to assemble in any force. It was on a lovely morning that my wish was gratified, and we started for Vinegar hill. The road, wild and rough, lay through a beautiful tract of country, diversified with mountain, field, and grove, to almost all of which belonged some tale of blood. At one spot it was remarkable, displaying to the left a field completely overspread with Heartsease, the little innocent flower smiling sweetly to the sun, while, on the right, beneath the shade of a few trees, stood a solitary tomb, the tenant of which had been there murdered and buried. His only offence was Protestantism. It was

here that one of my companions related the circumstances of the widow's tale which I am about to repeat: and at my request he took me straightway to her cottage, where, while her aged cheek burned with the fever of excited feelings, and the tear that would start seemed to be dried in the glow of her bitter indignation, she confirmed, in her own energetic language, the history of her terrible sufferings.

She was the mother of nine living children, and in present expectation of giving birth to the fourteenth of her offspring, when the town where she lived was taken possession of by the rebel force. The husband, a loyal Protestant, fell into their hands, and was conveyed to Vinegar-hill, hard by. Thither she followed to seek him; and hearing a simultaneous shot, in a place where some hundreds of the rebels formed a ring, she broke at once through it, and found a man, seemingly lifeless, extended on the ground—it was her husband; and the discharge that she had heard was the deliberate act of cold-blooded murder. She threw herself upon the bleeding body, in time to receive the last farewell of her husband, who immediately expired. When the first agony of her grief had a little subsided, she humbly begged the corpse of its butchers, but was refused, and threatened with a similar fate, unless she made the sign of the cross, after their fashion, in token of renouncing her faith: but no menace could prevail upon her to do this. Several priests came forward, trying every method of persuasion and intimidation, but all was vain. She then requested of them, as the greatest mercy they

could shew, to bring her nine children, to put them to death with her, and to throw all their bodies into the same pit. However, they drove her away; and after a long watch, seeing them disperse, she returned to the spot where she found her husband still lying, cold and stiff; she then hastened back to the town, in search of a carriage; but all her efforts could not procure a horse, or any animal to draw the car which a neighbour allowed her to take from his shed. She waited till night-fall, then took her three eldest boys and two girls, and by hard labour, three pulling and three pushing the car, they got it to the top of the hill, placed the murdered body in it, and managing the yet more difficult descent, conveyed the husband and father to his desolate home, where they could indulge the agony of their hearts over the mutilated remains.

But, among the Irish poor, nothing is deemed so important as a burial: to let a friend remain uncoffined is, in their sight, a heinous sin. The wretched widow again sallied forth, and sought by every means to procure a coffin; it was impossible—no one could have dared to make it for such a purpose, however well inclined; for the rebel force was encamped on the hill, and had unresisted possession of the town. Love, however, would not be baffled, when the dearest object of its devotion called for the last service that could be rendered: she looked about, and at last fixed on the best piece of furniture she possessed, a settle-bed, so formed as to afford a couch by night, and a seat by day. She brought an axe, chopped off the legs and other appendages of the bedstead, and leav-

ing only what supplied a sort of chest, to hold the bedding when not in use, she there deposited the body, carefully closed it down, and at midnight, assisted by her children, all of whom were young, she got the box upon the car, moved it on as before by their united strength, and conveying it to the Protestant burying-ground, they there dug a grave, and under the gloomy sky of midnight, not daring even to let a plaint be heard, they laid the precious burthen down in its silent habitation, filled up the space, and returned to find their little cottage completely occupied by the rebel troops, who called the exhausted and heart-broken mourners to cook their food, and attend on them.

This event could hardly have been forgotten under any circumstances ; but it appears that, not more than three months ago, one of the family being buried, the grave was dug on the precise spot where the murdered man had been laid ; and the old settle-bed was found, after the lapse of thirty-nine years, in such preservation as to identify it at once. I cannot doubt that to this circumstance was attributable some of the deep and vivid feeling of the old woman, who seemed to dwell upon the recital as of a thing of yesterday. I could not but, in my heart, re-echo her fervent expressions of attachment to the cause in which she had suffered so bitterly, but I spoke to her of the forgiving love of Christ, and sought to win her from the poignancy of her recollections, probably with little success : and when, almost immediately afterwards, I found myself labouring up the difficult ascent where she and her poor children had forced the car along, I could not but

marvel at the force of that affection, surviving the life of its object, and braving the sanguinary vengeance of a jealous foe, to achieve what seemed almost an impossibility. The hill is very steep, much interspersed with rock ; and on its summit is a perfect ridge of that substance, rising to a considerable height, and affording on its flat termination a fine post for overlooking both the town and the surrounding country for many a long mile. To the right of this ridge stands a ruin, formerly a windmill, of which only a dilapidated tower of brick-work remains. This was perfect in 1798, and contained two stories ; it was used as a prison for the wretched captives, who were brought forth and piked, or shot, as the vengeance and caprice of the rebels, directed by their wicked priests dictated. The spot where they fell and were buried was pointed out to me ; and there, in great profusion, I found a most beautiful pigmy race of flowers, adhering to the stones that occupy the soil, and bearing beneath their rich and creamy petals a sanguine blush too nearly allied to the harrowing recollections of the scene. I never saw this exquisite little blossom in such surpassing loveliness as on the grave of those victims ; not fewer than twenty varieties of small and beautiful wild-flowers might be gathered from among the heath and moss and rugged grass of that hill of slaughter—itsself by no means large, among the mountains of Wexford ; and when I looked around me, and followed out the long extent of smiling landscape, unmarked by a scar, and again glanced at the fairy blossoms that actually gemmed the rock beneath my feet, the swell

of indignant sorrow became almost intolerable, to think that through the cruel neglect of those who held in their possession for nearly three hundred years an unfettered bible, poor Ireland has seen the blood of her children shed on every side, while their souls went down in darkness to the pit of destruction.

It is futile to attempt an evasion of the charge. The blessings of the reformation have never yet been extended to Ireland. Our second Henry invaded the land under an express commission from the man of sin, at Rome, to darken the light which then shone upon it, and reduce it to the state of vassalage from which it alone, among the nations, was exempt. I have looked on the mighty fortresses that he built, to establish his progressive sway : and on their cotemporary churches, erected for the idol-worship of Rome, and crumbling into decay, without one proclamation of Gospel truth having been made within their walls. I know that the curse was planted here seven centuries back, by English invaders ; and here I find it flourishing in hateful luxuriance, while the hands that would uproot it hang down, and the knees that would hasten to the work wax feeble, through the lack of that encouragement which England at her peril withholds—yea, she smiles upon the deadly evil, fosters it as a desirable thing, and with daring hand deals “a heavy blow” at Protestantism, which shall recoil upon her with a force to lay her proudest honours in the dust, unless she speedily repent. The Lord has wonderfully blessed the efforts of his servants who, individually, came to the help of poor Ireland against her foes ; and

they will find it is no small matter to have cleared their own souls from the blood of this people ; and to be found with His mark on their foreheads when the day of national vengeance comes ; but it is a fearful thing to look abroad upon a population of many millions of immortal creatures, and to see six-eighths of the whole number delivered over to Satan, in the persons of his most active delegates, while the little remnant who have escaped the yoke are as sheep appointed to be slain at the first word of havoc from those to whom mercy and peace are alike unknown.

This land of beauty was once the land of saints : she shone as bright in piety and learning as still she shines in natural loveliness and splendor. Who darkened this star ? Oh, it is an awful question ; for we allow the deeds of our fathers if we seek not by every means to remove the veil which they cast over her heart. Could I bring the Christian ladies of England to see what I am now surveying—the struggles of a persecuted and impoverished church to gather into her folds the little ones from among the lost sheep of poor Erin—could I shew them the works of mercy and love, laborious and long-suffering patience, carried on beneath the roofs of some village school that owes its existence to the self-denying generosity of a pastor whose lawful dues are withheld, and his home and life left at the mercy of those who hate him for his love to their souls—surely those Christian ladies would suffer the word of exhortation yet again, to abound more and more in the work of helping forward the cause of God in this land.

This little Stonecrop that I brought away, a touching memento of the widow's tale, will flourish, I hope, in my garden, a perpetual preacher to quicken me in the service of its native land : for I cannot look upon it and forget the hill of slaughter ; or cease to remember that the power which deluged it in innocent blood still exists unchanged and unchangeable, gathering daily new strength for another out-burst of exterminating hatred against Protestantism. I speak not this of the misguided individuals, who are of all persons most pitiable, and the blood of whose souls cries out against those who leave them to perish in their guilt ; I speak of the sin not of the sinner. Or, if of the latter, I allude to the wilful and wily deceivers, who lead them to destruction, and the unfaithful legislators who connive at it. The mightiest powers of earth and hell seemed leagued to destroy this emerald gem of an island, but greater is he who is for her, than all that be against her. Midnight murder prowls round the base of her towering hills, watching its destined prey : but the mountain is full of horses and chariots of fire, guarding the Lord's devoted people. I weep, but I do not tremble : those who are hardening themselves against God will not prosper ; those who drive their nefarious traffic in the souls of deluded men shall be put to shame and destroyed. The snare that is wrapped round this people will be broken, and Erin, 'First flower of the earth,' shall breathe the fragrance of accepted praise—'first gem of the sea,' she shall once more sparkle in a light that cannot be quenched. The steadfast immoveable laborers who abound in the

Lord's work, cannot find their labour in vain in the Lord. He may try their faith and patience in a yet hotter furnace, but the blessing will come at last; though it tarry, we will wait for it; it will surely come, and not tarry. "Fear not, O land; rejoice and be glad, for the Lord will do great things."

CHAPTER IX.

THE YELLOW BROOM.

AMONG the many truths to which it would be our wisdom and happiness to pay more regard than we do, is this: that every thing has its bright side—sin only excepted. Within the range of a small neighbourhood, often of a single family, we meet with individuals whose mode of viewing the ordinary occurrences of life is so dissimilar, as often to invest the same event or circumstance with two characters, as distinct as sunshine and gloom. A naturally cheerful and sanguine temper will find in almost every thing something to be pleased with: a truly spiritual one, something for which to be thankful; and when both are united, the joyousness that abounds is delightful—to its possessor at least—while the command, so hard to some mourning spirits, “Rejoice always,” is any thing but a grievous one. A cold, dreary, leafless spring, succeeded by a sudden burst of summer, is a fruitful theme to those whose favourite point of view is not the fairest side. ‘Here we are transferred at once from the rough blasts of the north-easter to hot scorching rays, without any gradations of temperature. No

spring showers, no light and genial zephyrs, no succession of plants in their season, but a rude, abrupt jump from the muffs and boas of February to the gauzes of July. How miserable !' So sighs one portion of the gentle community ; while the other exclaims, ' What a rare collection of sweets and beauties, seldom grouped together ! The lilac and laburnum mingling their blossoms with the rose. Spring has worn a sombre mantle, only that her younger sister might sparkle for once doubly gay in her borrowed gems. We are like voyagers, wafted on with unconscious rapidity from a frigid to a genial clime forgetting in the brilliant beams around us the shivering discomfort of last week : or only remembering it to enhance the delight of basking beneath such a sky.' Which of these parties is the wiser, it might be presumptuous to decide : but the latter unquestionably is the more happy.

Not far from my cottage-door grows a shrub, or rather a tree, of sunny character and beauteous aspect, on which I cannot look and be sad. It is one of the many graceful things that spring up, spontaneously, in the wilder tracks of our English garden ; and the person who can pass it by unnoticed is more difficult to please than I am. The BROOM, with its irregular stem, its capricious twists, and wild, straggling shoots, thrown out, as it were, at random, yet never failing to form a wand of striking elegance, marked by the small, but exquisitely-shaped blossom of deeply-shaded yellow—this Broom seems quite a character among the trees : and when I study that character I find its

prominent points to be independence, decision, vigour, and a beauty alike profuse, unique, and eccentric. Let it be remembered I am not speaking of a shrub, such as the gardener permits, here and there, to attain a certain height for the diversifying of his well-tutored array ; but of a tree, some eight or nine feet high, rampant in healthful freedom, and stooping with patriarchal dignity to touch my head as I pass below.

The Yellow Broom was always a favourite with me ; and all its associations were sunshiny like its blossom. They are not the less so now that, having found a very fitting antitype for it, I am obliged to look far beyond the tops of much higher trees towards his present abode. His memory will, indeed, bring a tear to the eye, but never unaccompanied with a smile from the gladdened heart. What he was to me and hundreds more, can never be forgotten by us : what he is in the full enjoyment of all that his soul long panted after, forms a contemplation most delicious to those who know how in this tabernacle he groaned, being burdened. Burdened with much suffering from bodily infirmity : with more anguish of spirit, from the clearness of his views on the subject of England's waning star. It would be idle to throw a flimsy veil over the person alluded to : unworthy of the name of Howels, to shrink from inscribing it, even on this humble page.

I had a dread of running after popular preachers, and was also, in some measure, infected by prejudices, the holders of which, like myself, knew not the man whom they dispraised. Accordingly, my first visit to

Long-Acre chapel was made rather in compliance with the usage of the family whose guest I then was than from choice. It so happened that in the morning's discourse he uttered a sentiment at once so just and so little calculated to flatter his hearers, that it completely rivetted my attention. He said that of all characters he knew none more deeply to be commiserated than a young man of piety, talent, and eloquence, placed in one of the metropolitan pulpits: for that surrounded by an admiring London congregation, and greeted with their applauding eulogies, he would soon find himself in the plight of a man embraced by a bear—crushed by the animal's deadly clasp, and stifled with its poisonous breath. 'The minister,' thought I, as the energetic denunciation reached me, 'can hardly be in the habit of prophesying smooth things to his flock.' I secretly wished that he would take up a subject on which I was, at the time, much exercised: the extraordinary proceedings then commencing among the followers of Mr. Irving. I was gratified: the untold wish was fulfilled; on that same evening Howels fully entered upon the question; and God made him the blessed means of so far settling my mind that, even under circumstances of peculiar trial and temptation, it never again wavered. The delusion was revealed under the strong light of opposing truth; and the snare so effectually broken that it could not be repaired.

From that time I cannot tax myself with having sought for other teaching, when Long-Acre was within my reach. Many a walk have I taken, of three

or four miles, through all the varieties of an inclement winter, to partake of its good things : for I never deemed the privilege of his, or any other ministry, an excuse for entering a carriage on the Lord's day. I never added the weight of my body to the burdens so cruelly and unlawfully laid on cattle, to whom the Lord has graciously extended the boon of the seventh day's rest. For this I desire to be most thankful, for the temptation was certainly great ; and there was no lack of plausible evasions, suggested by friends who, having persuaded themselves, would fain have persuaded me also, that they were guilty of no inconsistency in riding to church to hear God's prohibition against their so doing—nor of trifling with Him in prayer for grace to keep a law which they had made deliberate preparations for breaking within an hour afterwards.

I have alluded to the bodily sufferings of our valued pastor : they were great and grievous. If his flock had known what he sometimes underwent, while preparing their Sabbath feast, they would even have preferred to remain unfed. But he was then—to use his own beautiful comparison, ‘an out-door servant, exposed to wind and rain.’ Rough, indeed, were the gales that shook, and pitiless the torrents that overwhelmed that uncomplaining servant : and often, while his acknowledged singularities provoked the good-humoured smile, or furnished an excuse for the mocking laugh, in the many circles where he formed a frequent topic of discourse, the object of their free remarks was lying stretched out on the hard floor of his retired lodging,

seeking, in that position, a temporary relief from rack-
ing pain, brought on by unreserved devotion to his
duties,—efforts far beyond his physical strength—and
pleading with God for their souls. Exquisitely alive
to every touch, he withered where another would not
have winced, from the rough contact of spirits less
acutely sensitive: while the unaffected lowliness of
his character, joined with a delicacy that few could
appreciate, threw a veil over feelings that a more
common mind would have gloried in parading before
men. Modern refinement sometimes questioned con-
cerning him, as it does respecting the yellow Broom,
whether a plant so simply natural, so meet to grace
the wild heath, was adapted to shine among its fan-
tastic selections: and similar was the result. The
eye of true taste never failed to recognize in the one,
as in the other, a cluster of living gold, not to be vied
with by one of a hundred aspirants.

For this delicacy of body and susceptibility of mind
the days in which my beloved friend shone as a light
among us were too exciting. Within a short space
of time, he saw the glory of his adored Redeemer
sullied by the creeping in, to the very bosom of the
church, of a heresy, alike subtle, seductive, and ruin-
ous. To Howels it was horror unspeakable, it was
anguish intolerable, to hear of a whisper breathed
against the sinless nature of the holy, harmless, un-
defiled ONE, who was all his salvation, and all his de-
sire. He entered not upon that controversy in the
spirit of a theological disputant, coolly selecting his
weapons to combat an error; but as a disciple, com-

bining the love of John with the zeal of Peter, anxious to throw himself between his beloved Lord and the shame and spitting wherewith His enemies assailed Him. The fiery torrent of awful reproof that sometimes burst from his lips on this subject was not the studied language of a well-stored head, but the over-boiling of a heart inflamed with holy indignation, ready to exclaim, "The rebukes of them that rebuked Thee have fallen upon *me*." How many his faithful and fervent exhortations were the means of preserving from that snare, cannot be computed; I can only answer for myself, that I was one for whom, in this respect, his labour was not in vain in the Lord.

But another cause—if it may be called another—was dear to him as his own soul; the cause of Christ, as involved in the Protestantism of our country. His peculiar gift might be said to be the discerning of spirits: he could detect Antichrist under any disguise, and never failed to expose and denounce him, whether appearing as the open denier of our blessed Lord's proper divinity, or as the more specious impugner of his spotless humanity. But the papal Antichrist was never out of his keen view. Whatever prey his vigilant mind had started to run down, that great mystery of iniquity could not escape. The very soul of John Philpot, or of Rowland Taylor, seemed to have passed into his body; and when the flagon of England's growing iniquity was replenished from the golden cup of the accursed harlot, received into a God-defying alliance with our ungrateful, apostatizing state, it is well known that Howels' life nearly fell a

sacrifice to the intensity of his grief and indignation; and when he had so far subdued the bitterness of excited feeling as to venture on an allusion in the pulpit to what was then past recall, those who heard him, and they alone, might form some judgment as to his anticipations of what should follow upon that flagrant national sin. I cannot dwell on this subject, for it burns my very heart, even as it burnt his: but this I may say, that if, through the good hand of my God upon a most weak and worthless instrument, these poor pages are ever made serviceable to the sacred cause of Protestantism, I would desire to thank Him, that in the order of his providential dispensations he sent me to sit under the ministry of his dear servant, William Howels. The principle had indeed taken very deep and strong root in my mind before I was thus privileged: but at Long-Acre was the lesson learned of a bold, unhesitating, uncompromising avowal before men and in despite of man, of my own convictions. To the very last did our teacher maintain his loud protest against the abomination that maketh desolate, standing where it ought not: and I pray for grace, at my humble distance, so to follow his example, that power to wield a pen may be vouchsafed to me no longer than while that pen is guided to bring before the eyes of my beloved countrywomen the exceeding iniquity of even a tacit connivance at the rapid overspread of that desolating abomination. Howels does not now lament that he wrought so diligently, bearing the burden and heat of the day: the in-door servant, housed and sheltered, and caressed in his Lord's presence, re-

grets not that he met the blast, and bided the pelting storm while tending the flock on a dreary waste.

Decision is a noble thing : it formed the crown of Howels' character. His sole object was to glorify God, and a more decided course no man could take than he did in pursuit of that object. My yellow Broom-tree seems resolved to rise as high, to spread as wide, and to put forth as many blossoms as it possibly can. To this is owing its dissimilarity from the more timid shrubs of its extensive race. It is not, I grant, so well drilled as they, nor so trim in outer aspect ; but it is a *tree*, while they are only bushes—it shelters my head, when they can but please the eye : and compels me, whenever I gaze on it, to look towards heaven. Alas ! how often do we stop short of that mark, when delighting in the plants we love. Even Howels had those among his constant hearers to whom his eloquence afforded an intellectual feast, without reaching their hearts, or influencing their lives ; and how many whose consciences bear them testimony that such was not their case, have to lament, with me, over their comparative unfruitfulness, while tended and watered by his careful hand ! We were sometimes accused of idolizing him, just as I am taxed with making an idol of my garden. It is untrue : like the beauteous flowers and juicy fruits, we receive him as a gift from God ! but we did not prize him half enough, nor were within any measure so thankful as we ought to have been. He brought us a message, and left it, though like a shadow, the beloved messenger departed from our sight. We shall

yet know more fully than now we do that there hath been a prophet among us. The Lord mercifully spared him the anguish of witnessing the rapid fulfilment of his own reluctant predictions. He saw the cloud, when no bigger than a man's hand—the hand that signed away our national faith—and knew that the sky would shortly be overcast, and a torrent descend, not to refresh a parched land, but to deluge and ravage a guilty one. He girded up his loins, and was taken away from the evil to come, to a place where the joyousness of his unfettered spirit knows no cloud, no doubt, no fear; where he dives unchecked into the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; and sees, what before he was enabled to believe, how in despite of Satan and his thousand wiles, all things are working together for the glory of his heavenly King, and the good of those who love Him.

CHAPTER X.

BUDDING.

IT has often struck me, that the main defect of modern preaching and writing, as compared with those of earlier times, consists in overlooking too much the great point of union with Christ. To dwell in Christ, and Christ in us, is the believer's privilege; it is the very principle of his life. Without such union he enjoys no membership, but is, however he may flatter and delude himself, a stranger to the covenant of promise, without God, and without hope. Accordingly, we find in the ministrations and theological treatises of the old school a continual reference to this vital point: while the productions of private Christians of the same standing shew the effect of being thus perpetually put in remembrance of it. I do not mean to say that nothing of the sort is to be met with in our day; but the instances of such preaching are not very frequent; and among God's people I meet with many perplexing questions, many doubtful disputations, the origin of which I can trace to a very dim perception of this great truth, and a forgetfulness of it in the ordinary affairs of life.

It was remarked a short time ago by a noble and revered friend in whose family worship I was privileged to join, and who was expounding to his household the eighteenth Psalm, that the scripture which they were considering must be taken in a threefold application: the words were spoken by David, in his own character; they are spoken by Christ, through the mouth of David; and they may be spoken by the poorest, the weakest believer, in virtue of his covenant union with Christ. This, and many similar observations uttered at the same time, led me again to reflect on the unfrequency of what I know to be the words of truth and soberness, among Christians: and sent me into the garden to seek illustrations of a doctrine so important; for I well knew that they abounded there.

The most striking representation had lately been presented to my sight in a specimen of the art of budding, carried to a singular extent. I had seen a Rose tree of immense growth, bearing in full beauty more than twenty varieties of that exquisite flower. From the deep crimson tint, and rich velvet petals of the damask, to the pale, drooping, transparent sickliness of the feeblest China rose, every gradation of hue, texture, and form was to be found thriving on one parent stem. Viewed apart, each was a rose, fair and fragrant: collectively, they formed an object of surpassing splendour; radiant with beauty, and breathing an atmosphere of perfume. Beneath the profusion of clustering leaves and shining flowers, the stem that supported them was unseen; but well I knew that,

apart from the stem, not one of them could continue to exist. They had been culled from different families, severed from their natural stock, and made partakers together in that from which, and from each other, they were before aliens: but to remove them again—to regraft the expanded flower into the stem whence the bud had first been extracted, was an utter impossibility: they must remain or perish.

Who could contemplate this, and not remember the Rose of Sharon? who could pursue the contemplation without feeling anew the importance of that union by which we, wild and thorny flowers in our original state, are made partakers of his root and fatness, preserved in life, and nourished unto growth, not to our praise and glory, but to his own. I fancied the brambles and wild briars on a neighbouring common calling to one of those bright roses, ‘Come, and dwell among us, for awhile! impart to us of your sap and fragrance; and it may be that we also shall learn to bloom even as you.’ The reply must have been, ‘Not so: of myself I have nothing to impart: I live but while I grow upon this stem, and the uttermost that I can do for you is to bear testimony, that if, like me, you become a partaker in its vitality, you shall bloom as I do. We cannot come to you; come you to us.’

Now this is just what I want continually to apply to myself; and I have met with examples no less lovely, no less eloquent, among God’s children than among the flowers that he has given us, to teach while they adorn our path. One I will single, who, for brightness and attractiveness might vie with the richest da-

mask rose upon the tree, whose nearest connections and most endeared associates were still moving in the sphere of worldliness ; and whose professional advancement almost depended upon his making some concession to their demands ; but the Lord gave him so to feel his dependence on, and his union with Christ that he was proof against the united pleadings of interest and personal attachment : he kept himself unspotted from the world. When solicited to mix in general society, under the plea that his example would produce a salutary effect, his reply was much in the strain that I have fancied the Rose would adopt. ‘I can no otherwise present an example to others than as Christ dwelling in me enables me, however feebly and imperfectly, to reflect and to exhibit his image to men ; but to the promise of that in-dwelling grace is annexed a command to come out and be separate from what you desire me to mix myself up with. The very act of compliance would darken the light within ; how then could I shine in company where Christ can have no place ?’ It was objected that the Lord, when on earth, went among sinners, and even ate with them. ‘True,’ he replied, ‘and if I am allowed at the dinner table to speak of the lost sheep, of the pieces of silver, and the prodigal son, I shall consider myself as doing my Master’s work, But unless you can shew that I am called to such scenes in order to utter such a testimony, I must decline appearing there.’ On one occasion I knew this text adduced, in support of a pressing invitation to dine where the pleasures of the table were much pursued, ‘A bishop should be a lover of

hospitality.' The answer was, that he was no bishop; but that if his friend would come and take a seat at his table, he hoped to be found not deficient in the duty of hospitality, though he could promise him neither a feast nor a party. Another pleader, inviting him to a mess-table, assailed him with Paul's exhortation to Timothy, "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and because of thine often infirmities." He could not forbear laughing when he read the note; and answered in a strain of lively good humour, that to a *little* wine he never made any objection, though he was thankful to say his bodily infirmities were not such as to require a particular regimen. As to the quantity of wine, however, and the circumstances under which it should be taken, he doubted whether his friend's view would find a sanction in any of St. Paul's writings. In both these cases a snare was laid to entangle him in serious and fearful inconsistencies; but they were defeated by his watchful avoidance of the beginnings of sin.

Thus did L. answer fools according to their folly; but the path became more difficult when those who really wished him well spoke the convictions of their own minds respecting his supposed duty. To them he had ever one argument to oppose: and that one was the union which bound him to Christ, as a member of his body, a partaker of his life. 'I cannot,' he said, 'of my own will and choice, sit down among those who if I spoke to them of Jesus would receive the mention of that adorable name with scorn, dislike, or suspicion: who expect, as a matter of course, that

I should lay aside what they are pleased to call the peculiarities of my religious opinions, and become as themselves, at least so long as they do not outrage the rules of decency and morality. They demand from me a tacit acknowledgment that the truths which I hold are unsuited for the ears of polite society: they require that I should hide God's righteousness within my heart, and forbear to tell them of the salvation which I have found, and to which they are yet strangers. Oh, how weak must be the constraining love of Christ within my soul, when I can so lightly put him aside, so wantonly trifle with the eternal welfare of my fellow-sinners!

I have found it of great use, in many a perplexing juncture, to refer practically and experimentally to what we all in words confess—the abiding of the believer in Christ, and of Christ in the believer: and not one of my many many falls, and wicked inconsistencies, but I can trace at once to the neglect or forgetfulness of this privilege. I should not dare to be a partaker in other men's sins if I bore in mind that by so doing I allow the member to war against the head. I should not despise a weak brother, nor stumble at a strong one, if I considered the various offices of the hand, eye, foot, and that all are employed respectively for the advantage of the body. I should not flinch from a hard duty, if I remembered the sufficiency of Christ, enabling me, to do all things by his strengthening power: nor shrink from a painful trial, if I could always realize the fact conveyed in that striking expostulation, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME?" I may be

called to many a hard and seemingly a doubtful contest ; but Christ has already won the victory ; and if I be in him, that victory, through his conquest, is mine. What would a poor Rose do, if it had only its own weak stalk to bear it up to its appointed height ? Grovelling in the dust, its petals would be trampled under every hoof, and its beauty become defilement. But, supported by the firmness, nourished by the life of the solid stem, it lifts its head aloft, rejoicing in the beam, quaffing the dew, and exhaling in fragrance the secret spirit derived from its all sufficient stay.

The spot where the Rose-tree grows is almost a central point in Ireland ; and it affords a pleasing type of the comparative unity subsisting among those who worship one God, through the one Mediator Christ Jesus, in sincerity and truth, though differing as to the most expedient mode of conducting that worship, or on the peculiar forms of church government. I do not say that there is not a great diversity ; or even that they do not sometimes point against each other the thorns given for mutual defence ; but compared with the spirit of dissension too often manifested on the other side the water, there is much pleasing unanimity, and brotherly love. Assailed externally by a common foe, they can better appreciate the value of a bond which knits them together while uniting each to the great Head of the church ; and how lovely it is to see brethren dwelling in peace together—how unnatural the appearance of division and strife ! The aspect of a flower-garden is such, that even the heed-

less child is arrested to gaze on it, the most untutored clown acknowledges the charm of beauty and grace pervading it. Why is it so attractive? Because while every individual of its countless tribes retains a distinctive character of form, tint, and fabric, they all harmonize in peaceful association—all bear the evident impress of a divine hand; all reflect, in smiling gladness, the light of that day-beam which reveals them to us. I am not partial to the modern plan of planting in masses: it is one of man's supposed improvements on the design of God. The transition from a mass perhaps, of cold, dark, purple flowers, to one of glaring scarlet, or unmixed pink or yellow, offends the eye. We do, indeed, discover many instances of such planting in natural scenery, but these are carried on upon a grand scale, not parcelled out in small knots, with the studied contrast that usually pervades the fashionable array of a modern garden. Nothing can be more beautiful than the long line of white hawthorn flowers extending through a luxuriant hedge-row, or the deep rich purple of the heather drapery that decks some frowning rock, some lofty mountain, or wild track of uncultivated hills—the gay gold trappings of the abundant furze, the delicate blue of the flax, or showy blossom of the despised but beautiful potatoe plant. In all these instances, and many others, we have, I confess, a precedent for planting in masses: but then there is a breadth and a continuance in the picture, unlike the broken fragments of such a splendid whole, stuck in various quarters of a narrow parterre. Yet I do not advocate the system

of budding, though in the present instance it afforded a type of what I dearly love to realize: and what ought to be much more frequently brought before the Christian's mind by those whose office it is to teach and to build up. Would that, like the flowers, we could agree to differ on minor points, and heartily rejoice together in the gifts so freely bestowed upon all!

I have made but slight mention of L. though the recollection of his calm consistency, and thankful appropriation of all that Christ offers to his believing servants, often refreshes my spirit, stimulating me to follow his course. He crossed my path like the evening star, first appearing in a full blaze of light, and almost immediately sinking beneath the horizon: but there are some characters that may be read as it were at a glance, and such was his. A single rose upon the tree, he was one of the brightest, yet lowly and simple as the primrose on the bank; ever delighted to discover in his fellow-Christians whatever might lead him to esteem them better than himself: faithful in necessary rebuke: rich in heavenly consolations to those under the chastening rod; but using in each and every occasion the strong plea of perfect union with Christ, as alike a motive of action and the principle of spiritual life. Who could ever explore the depths of that scripture, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me?" There is something in this beyond the mere belonging to Christ: it shews an abiding in him

of the same nature as that so clearly set forth in his own parable of the branch in the vine. It is such a partaking in his fulness as cannot be known but by being really grafted into him, and living by his life. We wrong ourselves, and frustrate the grace of God, if we stop short of this. Actually united to Christ, every real believer is as the members to the head, and the stalk to the stem: but to attain to an experimental knowledge and enjoyment of this union seems to be the aim only of a few among many. "Christ in you the hope of glory," is a mystery that some do not seem to realize. "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus," is a similar testimony, full of hope, joy, and peace in believing, if we will believe it. We take too low and dishonouring a view of our privileges; we stand afar off, in our own conceit, while acknowledged by him as bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. We know not what it is to rejoice in the Lord always: to glory in the Lord; to confess his strength in our weakness; to feel his power resting upon us, in the moment of depressing infirmity. When the rain beats hard on a poor frail flower, and the stormy wind has bent its head almost to the earth, what principle of elasticity enables it once more to rise, to shake off the dripping moisture, and smile anew in renovated vigor? Surely it is the nourishing power of the deep-rooted stem circulating through its slender frame, that strengthens it to look up and meet the sunbeam from above, which but for that, would only hasten its decay. The very shining of God's countenance would destroy us, if Christ did not strengthen us to find refreshment in it.

I have met with not a few believers who are fearful of dwelling too much on this point, lest it may lead to presumption and indolence ; but of this there is no danger while we follow out the lesson conveyed in God's word, and exemplified in his works. The branch, we are told, does not bear fruit *of itself* ; yet we being addressed as branches, are exhorted to bring forth much fruit, that God may be glorified. If we can imagine the branch of a tree endued with sense and reason, we may easily conceive how, while putting forth its blossoms, and moulding its fruit, it must depend on the continual supply derived from its stem ; drawing freely from an inexhaustible source, in proportion to its present need. This is what the believer should feel : he has much work to do, but Christ supplies both means and skill to accomplish it : and if that supply should cease, he and his work must perish together. He has many trials to encounter : but whatever storm may assail him, Christ is the lifter-up of his drooping head, imparting strength to resist, patience to endure, and in due time joy to revive his spirit. And this he is pledged to do : the act of ingrafting makes all the treasures of Christ the property of each poor believer,—in the emphatic words of inspiration, “All things are yours.”

And oh, what a constraining power ought we not to find in this contemplation, urging, yea, compelling us to impart to others the rich gift so freely bestowed on ourselves ! Can we revel in such abundance, and take no thought for the destitution of the perishing souls around us ? Can we refuse to tell them what a

Saviour we have found, nor invite them also to taste and see how gracious he is? "How dwelleth the love of Christ in them?" is a question closely applicable to such. As loyal subjects, we must desire the extension of our Master's kingdom; as rescued victims we must long to see others partaking in the same deliverance. Indifference to the spiritual welfare of others is an awful symptom of decay in godliness; and they who feel it have need to be watchful and strengthen the things that remain, lest their neglected privileges be withdrawn, and the compassion which they shew not to their fellow-servants no longer be shewn to them.

CHAPTER XI.

PATRIOTISM.

THIS has been a brilliant season for flowers: alike in field and garden, hedge-row and conservatory, they have bloomed in extraordinary profusion and peculiar richness of colouring. It would seem that the long nursing of their roots under the covering of winter had imparted additional vigour to the vegetable world. Levelled with the ground by severe frost, and speedily buried under some feet of drifted snow, all disappeared at the early period of October, last year; and so tardy were the little buds in peeping forth, that April transferred her leaflets to May, and May reserved her blossoms to swell the abundant store of June: allowing us nearly eight months to contemplate the spectacle of naked twigs, and to fancy how the scene would look when at last the flowers should shew themselves. They came: and overpaid our long expectation. At least they richly overpaid mine: for, all things considered, I cannot say that so delightful a summer has ever before shone upon me. More joyous seasons indeed I have known: but their joy was false and vain; the hand of God the Creator was perhaps

traced and acknowledged in his works; but the love of Christ the Redeemer was unfelt—unknown. Such delight is perishable as the things that call it forth; unsatisfying as the ever-shifting scenery of floating clouds above us. Later summers have also brightened upon me, since the veil was removed, and the Saviour revealed, and every blossom that embroidered the pilgrim path was viewed as a pledge and earnest of the love that had no beginning and shall know no end. But there was sadness—Oh, how deep and dark!—upon my spirit: while the very value of the gift bestowed on me, rendered the unfelt poverty of others, fondly beloved, more grievous, more intolerable to my soul. Like a heavy cloud, ever and anon obscuring the sunbeam, it chequered the prospect, and it chilled while it darkened me. There is no sorrow like that: no tears like those which stream over the heedless ones who will not be gathered under the same sheltering wing where we find blessing and repose. But this is past; those summers are ended, and those souls are in heaven.

The season, then, which has now closed, the reign of flowers through the last few months, has been one of greater enjoyment to me than any preceding it. I have greeted those loved and smiling companions through a long and varied track; the first that expanded before me was, as I well remember, within view of the majestic Thames, which rolled, studded with sails, towards the eastern coast. Not many weeks had passed, before I was buried in a wilderness of the choicest sweets, that graced the borders of the

noble Slaney : thence transferred to the banks of Anna Liffey, the hands of Christian love brought daily supplies of the beautiful but fading treasure. The next were gathered from a grave, or viewed through mists of tears, as they gemmed the banks of a lake so fair and lovely that it was hard to trace in its gleaming waters the character of death : to identify with them the heaviest affliction of my life. But even there, and there in an especial manner, the little shining blossoms bore that impress, "God is love."

The next was a bouquet, gathered and tastefully arranged, and gracefully presented—for is not true courtesy always graceful?—by the hands of a poor labourer, who saw me long engaged in contemplating the magnificent ruins of the ancient fortress of Trim ; one of the finest feudal remains I ever beheld : worthy of a pilgrimage to view it. The incident of my stumbling on this splendid wreck, in a journey through cross roads, the delightful hour occupied in examining it, and the gift of those blooming flowers which grew in a garden at the foot of the eminence where it stands, left an impression on my mind, to be cherished while roses, pinks, and sweet peas survive to tell of their distant race under the crumbling walls of Trim. Next at the foot of Slieve Donard, I may truly say, I revelled in a paradise of flowers for many a sunshiny day ; and my little English garden now nourishes some roots that grew on its lofty crest. Again, within the walls of another noble mansion, crowning with its battlements the high ground of Tandragee, a trophy was prepared to indulge the traveller's peculiar taste, in

the form of the most beautiful garland I ever beheld : quite an architectural device, composed of glowing flowers. And this, too, was the work of humble hands ; the offering of affectionate hearts, the fruit of that ingenuity which a desire to give pleasure to others never fails to inspire. I must not again speak of Derry ; nor at present dwell upon the wild charms of Donegal, where masses of purple heather looked glorious in their simple beauty, as they studded and fringed the fantastic rocks, and crested the towering mountains of that unique region : while, spreading wide below, the delicate cup of the flax peeped forth in loveliest blue from amid its feathery supports. The last sweet relic of the flowers of Erin, was brought away from a bouquet that graced the cabin of the vessel which bore us homeward ; and truly I may quote a couplet from a foolish song, as being literally fulfilled in this pleasant trip :

May the way they travel be strewed with flowers,
Till it bring them in safety home.

And here, in a little patch of ground, well crowded with all that can be made to grow in it, have I watched the fading of the various specimens that seem doubly endeared by the fact of their having formed, as it were, the links of a pleasant chain, connecting me more closely than ever with the land I so dearly love.

But, for the present occasion I am not about to introduce a new subject : one frequently touched upon, but not recently, is so peculiarly fresh in my mind just now : and the type is no less fresh in my little

garden. Years roll on : but I cannot feel what Kirke White expresses :—

Thus doth the shade in memory fade,
When in forsaken tomb the form beloved is laid.

No : memory is a faithful chronicler, a mirror that retains the image once reflected in it as though it were still present ; and my dumb Boy's aspect, his joyous smile, his thoughtful frown, his eloquent gestures, and earnest attempts to convey the meanings that ever filled his mind, are as visible to the mental perception now, as is the little green shamrock to the bodily eye. Patriotism such as Jack's I have rarely met with ; and many a time have I pondered, during the last few months, on the nature and origin of that passion in his heart ; for a passion it really was. His home was an obscure cabin, in the long, narrow street that formed one outlet from a considerable city. His steps rarely strayed beyond that dark and dreary street ; he scarcely knew his way into the neighbouring fields : and of the peculiar features of Irish scenery he was perfectly ignorant. The habits of those around him excited only disgust in his naturally delicate mind : and he never ceased to remark on the superiority of English cottages and customs. Of the geographical situation of places he had no more idea than has the pen which I write with : nor had any sentiment, either in prose or verse, been conveyed to his mind, that could excite or cherish a particle of nationality. To say truth, I was somewhat dissatisfied at the unequivocal indications which he gave of greatly preferring my native land to his own : insomuch that he used to say,

in a laughing way, 'Jack loves pretty England; doll mam loves bad Ireland.' The term doll he used to signify, in a civil way, that the person to whom he applied the epithet had a wooden head. But, ever as the glorious light of the Gospel of Christ spread and brightened upon his soul, a feeling grew and deepened with it, to which I can hardly apply a name. The idea of returning to his own country was to him insupportable; indeed, if a fit of rebellion to which, like all the rest of us, he was subject, withstood all other means, the remark that he must be sent back to his home never failed to subdue him. Neither was this from a dread of enduring privation, for he often observed to me, that he could earn a good deal by working and drawing; but a half tearful appeal, whether I would send Jack to worship wooden gods, and kneel to the 'bad bread,' always shewed his real feeling; generally followed by an energetic assurance that he would be 'dead Jack' rather than do any such thing;—that they might kill, but should not corrupt him. Added to this was a most ardent desire to bring his parents and family to England; it was his dream by night, his theme by day, the subject of many a prayer, and the stimulus to many an hour's hard work with the pencil, by means of which he hoped in time to accomplish this darling object. Whence, then, the feeling so fervently Irish, that displayed itself continually, gathering strength daily, during more than six years' absence from his native land, and shining out in the very last glimmer of consciousness, when the hand of death was cold and heavy upon him! Some

of it he might and did catch from me, but nothing that had not its root in his own spirit could have become such a master-passion. He could not speak long upon that subject without tears: and the ardour of his kindness towards any poor countryman whom we might meet on the road, or who came to our cottage door to crave alms, was most affecting to witness. When, as was very often the case, we prevailed with some weary traveller from the coast, where he had recently landed and was walking up to London, to listen to God's word, while taking a little rest and refreshment, no description, no painting, could have done justice to the boy's appearance. His usual position, on such occasions, was to stand behind a chair, so as to get a side view of the stranger without being observed; and with a fixed, deep colour in his cheeks, he would remain, like a piece of statuary, bending under his drooping eyelids such a gaze of intent observation upon the object of his solicitude as nothing could divert. He, of course, knew not a word that passed; but the purport he well knew: and often have I thought, as I looked upon him, after the beautiful words of St. Paul, as expressing his tender yearnings over his countrymen, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth till Christ be formed in you!"

When the door closed finally over such a guest, he would, if the case appeared a promising one, give a loose to great joy; often expressing it in the most extraordinary descriptions of what he supposed to be the feelings of Satan on the occasion. He would make strange grimaces of discontent, grief, and rage,

saying, ‘Devil very dumpy ; devil cry ; devil mad.’ Then he would express what must be the consequences to the Romish priesthood if the people were converted ; and no one could behold this part of the representation without laughing. He would personate a priest, shew him extorting his dues and gifts from the poor people ; then describe the latter as refusing them, and, instead of money, pulling out a bible from their pockets. Then, on the priest’s part, all the gradations from violent rage to smiling persuasion, and at last to a most humble entreaty for a little cash. It was amazing how he, who never in his life witnessed a theatrical exhibition of any kind, would perform a complete pantomime ; and that so well that any explanation or elucidation, except as regarded the ways of the priests at home, was quite needless. When his delight had thus vented itself, he would gradually become serious ; and with subdued looks, but still in a glow of the brightest animation, would sketch the gladness of the angels at beholding a soul rescued from Satan, and the sublime vision that ever occupied his mind—the Saviour’s bleeding hand drawn over the record of a returning sinner’s misdeeds.

Jack was never careless about souls : no individual lacked a share in his busy thoughts on the great subject of the eternal doom : but there was no mistaking for a moment as to the fact if the person happened to be Irish. Then it became indeed a personal concern with him : all the scenes that had distressed his eyes in childhood, and the recollection of which grieved his heart would rise to view. He spoke of the drunk-

eness, the dishonesty, the dreadful quarrels and fights, for which his birth-place was disgracefully famous ; and above all, he dwelt with shuddering horror on the executions that he had witnessed at the goal near his abode ; where the priests went on to the last, lulling the wretched victims in a false peace, till their struggling forms were cast upon the wind. I never could bear his description of this ; but as his mind would have brooded over it unless allowed to throw off the burden by such communication, I let him proceed, contriving not to see what he was about. He would then follow the guilty soul into another state of existence ; and nothing could equal the fearful force of his conceptions of eternal despair, but the enchanting grandeur of those which he had formed of heavenly happiness. With the latter he invariably closed his subject. I have of late been reminded of this almost hourly ; for few hours have I passed during many months, without the pages of old John Foxe spread before me, and verily I have seen more of the dear dumb boy in the characters, the sentiments, the very language of our blessed martyrs, than I expected ever to trace in any human beings. I had contrived to give him a tolerable idea of queen Mary's doings, and the hold that it took on him was evinced in rather a strange manner. He never once alluded to the place of torment without telling me that Judas and queen Mary were chained together there. I could not enter into the thing as he did. I could not accord to that wretched woman the fearful pre-eminence that he assigned to her : but a closer acquaintance with the

sufferings of our English confessors has brought it involuntarily to my thoughts, with something like an acquiescent shudder.

But this patriotism:—it was a perfect thing in its way; he loved a pebble, or a blade of grass from Ireland; and he guarded like a surly watch-dog my little pot of shamrocks, if any irreverent finger threatened to approach it; and all these things were inseparably linked, in his very soul, with the spiritual concern of his people. Even when he wept over the stubborn soil in a drouthy season, because potatoes would not grow in Ireland for want of rain, the reason he gave for his tears was that the poor Irish would die before they heard of Jesus Christ's red hand; and his rapturous thanksgivings for a timely fall of rain were intermingled with earnest injunctions to me to send 'much bibles' over. I believe I have mentioned before, that his worldly all of two shillings sterling was the very first contribution ever given to the British Reformation Society: and I never trace the successful progress of that noble institution without beholding an answer to the simple fervent prayers that accompanied the gift. I sought and found the shamrock in every part of Ireland, during my late tour: and I could not but hail it as a type of the extensive power of that prayer, so passionately reiterated during the last moments of the boy's life. His hands, literally bathed in the streaming chills of death, rapidly moved to form with the fore fingers little crosses, and then violently to break them, in signification of destroying the idol crucifixes; then the right hand swiftly

passed up and down the palm of the left, to represent the spreading of mortar, and both joined together gradually raised as high as he could reach, to imitate the building of a spire, which was his usual sign for a Protestant church—then again lowered to spell the words, ‘quick, quick; Jack’s poor Ireland!’ implying that it was the only way to save his country, and must not be delayed. All this is as present to me as it was at the time, in February, 1831. Oh, there was a holy hatred of the destroyer of his people, and a solemn triumph in the near view of God’s righteous judgments, that ranked him with the martyrs, the confessors of the early days, when Christians knew no fellowship with Antichrist; when the unclean thing was an abomination to them; and when they dared not to throw a friendly veil, and spread a sheltering hand, over that which the Lord has solemnly declared he will consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming.

I often feel alone in these matters now; few will give themselves so to search the scriptures, so to read the history of Protestantism, and so to mark the workings of popery, as to kindle over the contemplation, and long to rush to the help of the Lord against the mighty. But though alone, I am not disheartened: when the little shamrock shall again hide its soft green leaves under the rivers of Protestant blood that have more than once drenched its native soil, then England will be roused. God grant it be not too late! It is for Him to determine whether he will accept such tardy service at our hands; but this I will

say, that those who are now lending their silver and gold, their time, their talents, their influence, and *their prayers*, to Jack's poor Ireland, in the spirit and with the view that belonged to him, will learn the blessedness of such a work when they meet the Dumb Boy in the kingdom of glory.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MIGNONETTE.

THERE is, I think, only one among the usual phenomena of our climate, to which I cannot reconcile myself. A clear sunny sky is exhilarating, a cloudy one generally picturesque. Light rain is refreshing; a good pelting shower is emphatic. A gusty day is pregnant with amusing incidents, a steady gale rouses all one's energies to withstand it; and a regular tempest is the *ne plus ultra* of magnificence. But a fog! a misty, drizzling, distilling from a low, colourless, shapeless, monotonous sky—this is a sore trial of patience. Nor am I singular in acknowledging the ungenial influence of such a season; for my dog drops his ears, and looks pensive; my cat exhibits an aspect decidedly melancholy; my playful squirrel huddles himself up in a corner of his box, disregarding the call to come forth; and even my noble falcon, bold as the mountains of her native Donegal, and sprightly as the peasant maidens who pull the flax at their feet—even my beautiful Jess, sits with ruffled plumage and depressed head, a miniature personifica-

tion of the king of birds, as described by Gray, when slumber has quenched

The terror of his beak, the lightning of his eye.

Who would not pity a poor scribbler under such circumstances, reminded by a hint from the region of types—I mean a typographical, not a typical hint—that it was full time to supply the cravings of the press with another Chapter. With loitering step and woful countenance, and head as misty as the weather, I entered my study this morning, trying to conjure up the phantoms of some appropriate reminiscences, when behold! just placed on my table by the hand of affectionate indulgence,—unconscious how timely was the boon—appeared two flower-pots, the one containing a most beautiful heath, the other a plant of fragrant mignonette. Both of these are full to overflowing with recollections precious to my heart. The language of flowers, addressed to me as I walk along, is ever, ‘Don’t you remember?’ and oh, in what touching unison the heath and mignonette appeal to my spirit now! The seed of the latter was the first that my fond father gave me to sow in the little garden portioned out, in his own most noble and spacious one, and divided between me and my lovely brother, with the scrupulous impartiality that tends above all other things to keep unbroken the bond of fraternal love: the former, the flowering heath, was the last gift bestowed by that beloved hand on his delighted girl, before a sudden instantaneous blow, laid it powerless in death. I know not how, but hereafter I shall know,

why two out of the three precious ties which bound my heart from infancy were snapped with such fearful abruptness:—why my midnight sleep was broken by a frantic summons to come and see my father die; and why, after many a long year, my waking eye must fall upon a letter exciting no alarm, but holding out the hope of pleasant news from the distant object of my fondest affection—and telling me that he was drowned.

“Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.” There is not in man, nor in any created intelligence, that which will enable the lacerated heart secretly and sincerely to breathe those words. I say secretly, because, without any conscious insincerity, the lip will often utter such language, when the spirit is internally writhing with resisted, but not subdued rebellion. I know not whether perfect and unvarying resignation to the stripes of our Father’s rod is the experience of any of his children. It is not mine: rebellion is written on me, in legible characters; but sometimes, when the tide of awakened emotion sets in with a rush of recollections the most overwhelming, a voice mightier than the noise of many waters, says, “Peace, be still!” and immediately there is a great calm; so great, so sweet, so wonderful, that it can be no other than the work of Him, who, touched with a feeling of our infirmities, has the sympathy of man to comprehend the sorrow, and the omnipotence of God to subdue it.

Now, looking again upon the flowers before me, I am struck with the vast privilege of mind: its pre-

rogatives so far above the nearest approach that animal instinct in its highest development can attain to. My dumb companions are all remarkably sagacious, and have been brought to such an amicable understanding, that the little dog frequently shares his basket with the cat,—the latter has many a game of play with the squirrel, through his bars,—and I have seen the falcon between the dog's paws, without either exhibiting any alarm or anger, although the whole party combine in testifying the hottest displeasure if a strange animal enters their presence. So companionable they are, that sometimes I can hardly trace the separating line between their fine instinct and the reasoning principle in man; but here it stands out in striking inferiority. There is in them no perception of what is so thrillingly felt by me; they all look at the beauteous plants, because their vigilance is alive to the introduction of any new object among them; the squirrel is fearful, the cat suspicious, the falcon curious, and the dog jealous: but the whole world of flowers may bloom in all their splendid tints, and breathe their united sweets, without affording aught that can counteract the atmospherical influence. In short, matter remains buried in the fog, while mind soars far above it to regions of sunshine and joy.

The Mignonette, as I have remarked, takes precedence of all other flowers in my gardening associations. Well do I remember the site of my small estate, skirting a gentle grassy ascent in the orchard, down which it was our special delight to roll our plump

little persons on a warm dry day. My father, whose taste for floriculture was remarkable, had requested his favourite gardener to procure a new and choice specimen of the flower : and, on opening the paper, he exclaimed, ‘Why, Thorne, you promised me a particular sort ; but this is the common Mignonette.’ ‘No, no sir,’ replied the gardener, proudly pointing to the inscription on the wrapper ; ‘this is the Mig-no-net-te.’ The deep dimple in my father’s cheek betrayed the smile that his kind feeling strove to repress ; and without farther remark, he served out to us respectively a pinch of the distinguished seed, which we carefully deposited and raked over : though I cannot suppose that it came to maturity ; as an obstinate propensity for having what is called too many irons in the fire generally induced me to set one plant over another, to the destruction of all. The Mignonette became, however, from that day, a prime favourite with me : and such it will remain, ‘while memory holds her seat ;’ for it brings to mind, almost to view, that noble orchard with its many trees : in the midst of them a magnificent mulberry, of great age and extraordinary dimensions, from whose topmost height I have often seen the large white owl sally forth on her nocturnal foray, and the bat wheel round and round, then plunge into the impenetrable fortress of twisted boughs and broad luxuriant leaves. On the opposite side of the garden a shrubbery wound, interspersed with many rare and beautiful plants ; while our own little grassy knoll stretched down even to the low windows of the principal room in an old-fashioned

brick house, covered to the eaves with a vine that seemed coeval with itself. These recollections are the sweeter, because the scene survives in memory only. I was but ten years old when we bade a final adieu to the abode : and, eight years after that, having an opportunity of revisiting it, I flew, rather than ran, to the window of my old apartment overlooking the garden, and beheld—a timber-yard !

Sometimes I regret having ever undertaken these Chapters. They lead to much egotism : and no doubt provoke many smart observations from readers whose minds, unsoftened by adversity, and, perhaps, naturally superior to the comparative trifles that always had power to engage mine, see little besides puerility, affectation, and prejudice, in their pages. Yet, occasionally, I meet a tearful look, accompanied with the remark, ‘Your chapter touched a chord in my bosom, and soothed a troubled spirit ;’ or something similar. Therefore, I pursue the theme, desiring to assure those who feel with me that their approval is dear to my heart ; and protesting to those who do not, that they cannot think more contemptuously of me and my work than, by God’s grace, I am myself enabled to do.

Next after the heartsease, I think the Mignonette is the most perseveringly delightful of flowers. As lowly in situation, less attractive in aspect, but so fragrant, so durable, so willing to take root, and grow, and gladden all around it, in any soil, on any spot, under any circumstances, it seems to typify the active, unassuming Christian, with singular propriety. How often, on

entering a garden, or a room, the sense is feasted as by the odour of a thousand flowers, when not a single bright tint meets the eye, until the faint blush upon those tiny blossoms, distinguished them from the green stem and leaf, reveals the source of such welcome fragrance. That blush especially becomes the lowly flower and the retiring Christian, who lives, and grows, and works, while others live, and grow and sparkle. There are many such: my Mignonette, like the ivy, represents a class; and I will name that class forthwith, and glory in it, while I name it—The Irish Scripture Readers.

‘What! more of Ireland and the Irish?’ Dear friend, yes. You do not know enough of them yet, not even if you be cradled in the very bosom of the Green Isle. Some of you are, I know; and some will read this, who may remember when, amid a cluster of warm hearts, beneath the shade of a noble grove, near a venerable ruin, where a very paradise of bright flowers and brighter smiles is watered by the majestic Slaney, a fair twin said to me, ‘We do love your chapters, and cherish all the flowers you name.’ That day was one of deep enjoyment, and infused new energy into me: it taught me that young hearts might be roused, and young hands nerved in the cause of their country, even by such means as these. Let those who refreshed my spirit then, cherish the little, lowly Mignonette, and blend with its character the humble work of men who, unobserved, disregarded, yea, often trampled upon, are breathing through the wilderness the savour of life unto life.

These men are generally, indeed almost exclusively, taken from the humblest walks of society, day-labourers, weavers, and sometimes the keepers of hedge-schools. The word of life, by some appointed means, reaches the ear and heart of a poor native Irishman : he feels its quickening power, and being himself raised from the death of trespasses and sins, he looks abroad upon his countrymen, still lying under the shadow of death, and constrained by the love of Christ, burns to make known among them the unsearchable riches of his Saviour. The Irish being his vernacular tongue, he speedily learns to read it, by means of some circulating school of the blessed 'Irish Society,' and, armed with the Sword of the Spirit, he goes forth to assail the strong holds of Satan, in the heart of the Beast's dominions. This exposes him to a storm of persecution, well understood by such as reside in Ireland, but inconceivable by an English subject. As regards his own neighbourhood and class in society, it may truly be said that every man's hand is against him, though every man's heart is not. The power of priestly intimidation is brought to bear on all who venture to encourage him ; for there is not upon earth so terrible an object to a true priest of Rome, as the Holy Bible ; unless it be the man who dares to proclaim its sacred truths, in a language understood by the people. Consequently, the vassals of popery must stand arrayed to oppose him ; and it is too undeniable a fact that except where the mind has been spiritually enlightened, the nominal Protestant beholds with suspicious dislike one who has for-

saken the religion of his fathers ; and sneeringly denounces 'the turncoat,' though the turn that he has taken is from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God.

There is not, perhaps, among the hundreds of Irish scripture readers, at this moment one who cannot set the seal of his individual experience to Paul's declaration—"No man stood by me." The enemy levels his fiery darts at every child of God : how much more anxiously and accurately at one who goes about to assail the strongest foundations of his most elevated throne ! I know, and I avow, that to attack Popery is to incur the fiercest assaults of hell : to rouse up a host of opposers, calumniators, open foes and false brethren, from without ; fears, temptations, and fiery trials within. Our solemn convictions are denounced as prejudices, our zeal as intemperance, our forethought, fanaticism. Shielded from violence, surrounded by encouraging helpers, and cheered on our path by their approving countenance, still we who, in Protestant England, dare to act a Protestant part, are liable to many an almost disabling wound in the house of our friends. What then must be the lot of the poor, despised peasant, in the very citadel of popery, taking an unsupported stand against the united forces of Satan and man, while the great contest that forced Paul to cry out, "Oh, wretched man that I am !" is carried on within, by the Spirit warring against the flesh, and the flesh against the Spirit.

But the Scripture Reader has taken up his cross, and follows Christ. He goes on often through per-

secutions, afflictions, stripes and imprisonment. He enters the obscure cabin at dusk, and addressing the poor, doubly benighted inmates, in the loved accents of their native race, he draws from his bosom the proscribed "story of peace," and tells them in the most persuasive of all words that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners—that wine and milk, without money and without price, are freely held forth to those who, up to that hour, had been spending their money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which satisfieth not. Some whose hearts the Lord opens receive the word with gladness; and the patient labourer, leaving it to a mightier hand to give the increase, proceeds on his thorny way, to plant in another spot. His life is thus passed, until perhaps the hand of persecuting violence way-lays him, and sends him to his sure reward by the blow of a stone, or the stab of a knife, while his last breath sobs out the dying prayer of Stephen, in hope that the murdering, blaspheming Saul may become like himself the preacher of the faith that now he persecutes. Or, if rescued from the assassin's hand, this lowly Mignonette of the Lord's parterre maintains his unobtrusive station at the foot of loftier shrubs, and breathes the odours of heaven around the heel that tramples upon his unresisting form.

Taking one of the class, I will name an individual well known to me, and to many in England. His name was Dennis Sullivan: his native place was Kerry. Converted to the truth as it is in Jesus, he abjured the soul-destroying errors of Popery, and made

himself eminently useful, as a Reader, to the Irish Society of London. When, in 1830, the Lord first blessed our efforts to the establishment of an Irish church in St. Giles,' Sullivan gave his whole soul to the cause; and I well remember that our earliest meeting was as fellow-labourers in it. About that time the Reformation society engaged his services, first as a reader, then as a clerk in their office; and most faithfully, zealously, diligently did he perform the duties of his station there, until the hour of closing it dismissed him to the post he so dearly loved—a teacher's place in the adult evening school, where the Irish labouring poor assemble to be instructed in reading the language of their distant homes. Often have I seen him, his honest countenance all alive with intelligence and shrewdness, seated in the midst of a motley crew, paviours, bricklayers, blacksmiths, and such like, now patiently instructing his tall pupils in the first rudiments of literature, now plunged into a hot controversy on some disputed point, and maintaining his ground with inimitable steadiness. Just behind him was a closet, stored with books of reference, which he used in a masterly manner; and I once witnessed a scene of curious uproar, provoked by a contumacious tailor, on a point of Popish doctrine, when Sullivan reached backwards to his treasury, produced the decrees of the council of Trent, and silenced them all.

There was also another point on which I found the most perfect sympathy in Sullivan: his attachment to D—the beloved heartsease, was intense. On the

day after D—— was called to his Father's house, Sullivan walked down some miles to where I was; and it being Sunday, he only arrived after we were in Church. Entering another pew, I did not immediately observe him: but when at last our eyes met, he burst into tears, and sat down. Never did I see a babe weep more unrestrainedly than that stout and resolute man continued to do during the whole service. I afterwards took him to visit some of our poor lost sheep scattered in that neighbourhood; and most touchingly did he address them. At the grave of D——, ten days afterwards, his ardent Irish feelings again defied all control. I scarcely saw him since; he was seized with fever, and in the London Hospital he yielded his spirit into the hands of the Lord Jesus: poor in this world, rich in faith, and an heir of the kingdom of heaven.

Dennis Sullivan's soul would have magnified the Lord, could he have beheld what is now our rejoicing and joy, the re-opening of the Irish church, after being for two years and a half closed, under the ministry of one who loves to labour for the outcasts of his native land. There is a work progressing even here: much more in Ireland. Whenever a sifting day arrives, it will amaze the most sanguine to survey the vast quantity of good grain now buried amid the chaff. Self-sown as it were, that is to say, directed by the hand of God without the intervention of presiding men, our Mignonette spreads with rapid increase, and the produce of an inch covers many a rood of ground. Oh, that there were more univer-

sally, among the Lord's people, a heart to cherish the young plants, to fence them from the foe, to shelter them from the frost, and spread them yet more widely by the aid of judicious cultivation! What kings and statesmen, ecclesiastics and warriors, have failed in attempting, until the numbness of despair has paralyzed their efforts, even that is being effected, by the slow and imperceptible, but sure progress of Irish Scripture Readers. The cabin inmate is christianized, and thereby the turbulent, sanguinary rebel becomes a peaceable loyal subject, both to his earthly and his heavenly Ruler. *The axe is laid to the root*; While it lopped the branches, its movements were alike conspicuous and vain; now they are equally retired and successful. To cut at the foundation of the evil and to lay the foundation of the good work, we must go low; and with the lowly is wisdom. Let us keep our eye upon the operation, raise our heart to the Lord, and extend our hand to the workmen, unwearyed as they are in well-doing; we shall then both see and share the sure and precious promise, "In due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not."

CHAPTER XIII

EDWARD.

AUTUMN is peculiarly a season of retrospection. Custom has taught us to close our year in mid-winter; our natural feeling would suggest a different computation—would select the falling leaf, and failing sunbeam, as the appointed memento of man's frailty, and warn him, as he looks upon the rapidly changing scene, to make up his accounts with time, to set his house in order, and with redoubled diligence to work while day-light remains, seeing how rapidly the night approaches when he can work no longer.

Mutation is the universal law in this changed and fallen world. Countries indeed there are, exempt from the dreary visitations of winter, skies ever bright, and flowers ever blooming: but in these the rending hurricane, the dreaded simoom, the frequent earthquake, the volcanic eruption, and the desolating pestilence, give more terrible note of that prevailing law than in our beautifully instructive clime, where the voice of admonition speaks to the conscious heart,

‘Behold, fond man,
See here thy pictured life: pass some few years,
Thy flowery spring, thy summer’s ardent strength,
The sober autumn fading into age,
And pale concluding winter comes at last
And shuts the scene.’

I would not barter my country’s mutable skies and ever-varying landscapes for those of any other land. I would not exchange this towering oak, that having put forth his tardy leaves the last of our forest trees, is even now preparing to shed them with his ripening acorns on the humid soil—no, I would not exchange the king of English vegetation for a whole grove of fat olives, or fragrant orange-trees, whose silver blossoms and golden fruit together laugh to scorn the very name of winter.

Such were my thoughts while strolling leisurely along, in a place where it is hard to say whether the eye or the mind may feast most luxuriously, providing the heart be not dead to that invigorating principle, Christian patriotism. Over my head waved the growth of many generations: magnificent chesnuts, with here and there a native oak, which ‘wreathed its old fantastic roots so high’ as to afford a commodious seat, whence I might look downwards, and trace the windings of the mighty Thames, as he bore, on a full tide, the ships of many nations forth by ocean. Oh what an inexhaustible treasury of By-gone days is stored in the flowing waters of old father Thames! Cold reason whispers it is all an illusion: those waters rippling past are as new to the scene as yonder bark, evidently fresh launched. They come from

springs afar, in little streams running among the hills, swelled by junction into yonder large body, and hastening away for their first plunge into the boundless main. By what stretch of imagination can you identify these young waters with the scenes and doings of remote ages? It is all very true, and somewhat annoying just now: but mutation is the subject of my present thoughts; and to adduce our ancient river as a striking example of that law does not so much discompose me as at another time it might. However, though Thames were dried up, and the very trace of his channel obliterated, there is that around me to compensate for such a loss. My eye rests on the spot whence a spirit was borne away by the angels of God unto the bosom of eternal love—the spirit of one who sojourned here but for a little while, to bequeath at its departure a blessing, long afterwards nursed in tears and blood, and burning flames, but now deeply rooted, widely spreading, and crowning the land with peace. It was there the sweet, the gentle, the saintly young Edward breathed his soul into his Saviour's hands, and laid aside an earthly diadem for that crown of righteousness which Christ has laid up for them who love his appearing—there he relinquished the broad realm of troubled England to enter upon an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for him, who was kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation. Our language contains few things more touchingly beautiful than the testimony of old John Foxe, our illustrious Martyrologist, to the excellency of this young

king. He lingers on the theme with the zest of a traveller, who, after labouring for many a long league through a howling wilderness, full of serpents and ravening beasts, and great drought, comes at length to a soft, sheltered valley, where gurgles a pure spring, overhung with fair trees, from whose branches depend many a cluster of ripened fruit. There he rests and ponders, and rejoices with saddened joy; for the valley is short, and his further track lies through scenes more dreadful than he has yet encountered. Thus does Foxe expatiate, in the midst of his painful travel through ages of persecution, on the bright oasis of young Edward's transient reign: and cold must be the English heart that does not reciprocate his feelings! On the same spot where Edward died, Elizabeth had first seen the light: and before her the fierce fire-brand of God's wrath—the dark and cruel bigot Mary—had there entered the world. One passage from the graphic pen of Foxe is vividly present to me, when I wander in these shades, and tearfully ask, Where has the mantle fallen of that blessed young saint, whom no eloquence could move, no plea of expediency prevail with, where the faith of Christ as opposed to the abominations of popery was concerned? I will quote the anecdote in the very words of our faithful Historiographer.

“In the days of this king, Edward VI, Carolus, the Emperor, made request to the king and his council to permit lady Mary (who after succeeded in the crown) to have mass said in her house without prejudice of the law. And the council on a time sitting upon

matters of policy, having that in question, sent Cranmer, then archbishop of Canterbury, and Ridley, then bishop of London, to entreat the king for the same. Who coming to his grace, alleged their reasons and persuasions for the accomplishing thereof. So the king, hearing what they could say, replied his answer again out of the Scriptures, so groundedly, gravely, and full, that they were forced to give place to his replication, and grant the same to be true. Then they, after long debating in this manner with his majesty, laboured politically in another sort, and alleged what dangers the denying thereof might bring to his grace, what breach of amity of the emperor's part, what troubles, what unkindness, and what occasions sundry ways it would enforce, &c. Unto whom the king answered, willing them to content themselves, for he would, he said, spend his life and all he had rather than to agree and grant to that he knew certainly to be against the Truth. The which when the bishops heard, notwithstanding they urged him still to grant, and would by no means have his Nay : then the good king, seeing their importunate suits, that needs they would have his majesty to consent thereto, in the end his tender heart bursting out into bitter weeping and sobbing, he desired them to be content. Whereat the bishops themselves seeing the king's zeal and constancy, wept as fast as he, and took their leave of his grace ; and coming from him the archbishop took master Cheke, his schoolmaster by the hand, and said, Ah, master Cheke, you may be glad all the days of your life that you have such a scholar : for he hath

more divinity in his little finger than all we have in all our bodies. 'Thus the lady Mary's mass for that time was stayed.'

Oh glorious By-gone days of my dear country, when a stripling king could confound with the pure word of God, the wisdom of two mitred heads : could silence every pleading of crooked expediency, by boldly avowing his willingness to suffer the loss of all temporal things, yea of life itself, rather than swerve from the straight path ; and finally, with his tears, prevail to avert the abomination that he was solicited to connive at ! Who can tell how deep the words and tears of their youthful prince sunk into the hearts of the two prelates, both of whom died at the stake, under the bloody rule of that same Lady Mary. We cannot forget that at Ridley's burning the candle was lighted in England, which, by God's grace, has never yet been put out ; and can we doubt but that the recollection of this interview did many a time both humble and cheer the spirit of the venerable martyr, during his long imprisonment, and many persecutions for Christ's sake ? Give me but this English oak, the pages of old Foxe, and the locality sacred to young Edward, and I care not how rudely the autumnal breezes may whistle around, or how many leaves, falling at my feet, may give warning that the pleasant scene of my summer stroll must soon be rendered untenable by the snows and storms of winter. Many a tempest has howled around, and shaken my oak, and by so doing has rooted it more firmly : many a hurricane, more wild than they, has rocked my coun-

try's church to its foundation, and with the same effect—for that foundation standeth sure, and the house falls not, because those who built it digged deep, and used a cement which God, not man, provided. Many a hostile navy has threatened to thread the mazes of that noble river, and bear destruction to the lofty towers of London: but since the pure faith of the gospel supplanted the false religion of Rome, no enemy has approached our city: it has been a quiet habitation. There the glorious Lord hath been unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein hath gone no hostile galley with oars, neither hath gallant ship passed thereby. For the Lord has been our judge, the Lord has been our law-giver, the Lord has been our king: he hath saved us.

Thus, dwelling on the past, I rejoice in the present; and for the future—may the Lord enable me to hope! Our Israel has ere now destroyed herself, beyond the power of man to succour, yet has found her help in God, whose mercies fail not. Instead of lingering on the painful theme of our national defalcation, let me praise the Lord for the precious fruits of his preached and planted Gospel in this realm, acknowledging the blessed contrast. Time was, when to possess a copy of that word in which is spiritual life, subjected the individual to bodily death; but now it can run, and is glorified in the remotest corner of our village retreats, no less than in crowded congregations of the rich metropolis. I can sit under my oak tree; and by a long but evident succession of bright links, I can connect with the enduring constancy of young

Edward the peaceful assemblage of that Sabbath school alluded to in a former chapter.

Through the abundance of spiritual instruction afforded by means of an unshackled press, I was enabled on each returning Sunday to present to every individual girl and boy a religious tract. Many questioned the propriety of giving them unreservedly, and suggested that a loan would be more beneficial. But the Lord had put it into my heart to give ; and in several cases there was much cause for rejoicing that I had so done.

One was that of a poor, aged bed-ridden woman, of whom I knew nothing, but whose little grandson was a volunteer in my school. He punctually carried to her his tract, and she had them all stored in a drawer by her bed-side. The neighbours who casually came in to make kind inquiries, or to sit awhile with her, were always requested to open his drawer, and to take out such tract as she, probably with a reference to their several characters and circumstances, should describe, and read it to her. She was a spiritual person, one of the Lord's poor ; and I had grounds for more than a surmise that the hoard was thus made extensively useful.

The other instance was more touching. I was told that a young woman, a perfect stranger to me, residing in a very retired spot three miles from my abode, was dying of decline ; and that having been converted by a tract belonging to one of my girls, she was also in great joy and peace. This tract, I was assured, she would peruse till her eyes failed, and then em

ployed her mother and the neighbours to read it to her for hours. My curiosity was excited to know what tract it could be that would furnish so much employment to readers; for I had given none containing more than a few pages. At length I walked over to Y—— Common, where the young woman resided, and found her indeed in a dying state, and not less happy than I had been led to expect. Inquiring what had been the means of leading her thus to the cross of Christ—for she had been at service in a very worldly family until declining health compelled her to return home, and well I knew that all around her cottage was a spiritual desert—the reply was given by a joyous smile, ‘It was Mary N——’s tract.’ I requested to see this tract: and greatly was I affected when the mother handed to me the dark leather binding of an old-fashioned volume, within which Mary N—— had neatly stitched every tract that she had received at the school—above fifty—ending with the one which I had given her on the preceding Sabbath. This was the inexhaustible ‘Tract’ by means whereof Mary W—— had been led to the Bible, and where she had found many a sweet commentary on the inspired word. She was in a most happy, resigned state, resting on Christ alone, and rejoicing in the growing attachment of her family to the truths of which all had alike been totally ignorant. It was an interview and an incident never to be forgotten. It embodied that precept long dear to me—“In the morning sow thy seed, and at evening withhold not thine hand, for thou knowest not whether shall pros-

per, this or that, or whether both shall be alike good." Mary W—— I saw no more ; she soon after departed in peace : but D—— who took the liveliest interest in my school, presented Mary N—— with a beautiful edition of Legh Richmond's 'Annals of the Poor,' 'Little Jane' having been especially blessed to her friend—and the whole occurrence, I think, produced a very beneficial effect on the minds of the children.

Among the girls was one who not only attended the school, but dwelt as a domestic under the roof. She had, from early childhood, given evidence of a gracious work within, at the age of sixteen she was called away. Strong convictions of her own unprofitableness, bitter regrets for not having more consistently and openly glorified Christ, with a lively impression of the majesty and purity of him with whom she had to do, produced a degree of despondency, that made her death-bed sometimes a trying scene. She could not realize her personal interest in Christ, or his presence with her, and was exceedingly cast down. This continued but for a time ; giving place to a very clear apprehension of all that the Lord had done for her, and much gladness of heart ensued. She was, however, of so quiet and simple a character that nothing appeared in her manner or language savouring of excitement. She was very calm, and always humble. This gave peculiar effect to the closing scene, which I narrate just as it occurred.

Sally had lingered long ; and though wasted to a mere shadow, no indication appeared of immediate dissolution. An elder sister had been watching be-

side her one morning, and seeing her in a very sound peaceful sleep, she softly arose, to pay some attention to a younger girl, who was indisposed in the same room. She had not stepped four paces from the bedside, when she heard Sally, in a voice of the most sudden and eager joy, and so loud as to be heard by all in the cottage, exclaim, ‘Ann, Ann, the Lord Jesus is come for me!’ Ann sprang back instantly, but Sally was gone. She had just started from her quiet slumber, turned her face up from the pillow, and with that cry of wonder and delight—for the tone and the lifeless countenance vividly expressed both—she had departed to be ever with the Lord.

And these results, with many many more, sprang from a single proclamation of the love and power of Jesus! These are the blessings that flow from an unfettered bible, and a preached gospel. To secure this young Edward wept and prayed, and, in a strength derived from above, resisted even the TOLERATION of that deadly foe to Christ and his truth, ‘the Lady Mary’s mass.’ This venerable oak, on whose gnarled and strangling roots I recline in thankful meditation, may have witnessed the secret prayer, and sheltered the meek head of that twice-anointed child of God. It bears the marks of venerable and decaying age; and what are three centuries in the growth of an English oak? In an antique painting of the palace, as it then stood, I mark an avenue of young trees, in the exact line of which my oak seems to stand: and while pleasing myself with this imagination, the very breeze that whistles under its wide branches

seems to infuse new energy into the soul that ponders on the By-gone days of England's battle against the proud pontiff of Rome. The heroes of that day, mighty in weapons that were not carnal, who conquered by dying, whose faith was victorious over the world, and who overcame Satan by the blood of the Lamb—these pass in review before me, heralding the peaceful rule of divine truth; and filling my heart with hope, that if rallying forces of the adversary again summon the servants of God to the combat, a faithful band will not be lacking to wield the sword of the Spirit, and boldly to lift up a holy standard against those who come in like a flood.

CHAPTER XIV.

DERRY.

It may appear strange that one whose delight is in the free fresh air of the garden, and among the living glories of its bright progeny, should have recourse to a *hortus siccus* for a subject, when all the flowers of autumn, beautiful in their sobered tints, are proffering their gentle farewell. But so it is: I have looked upon them all, tracing many a similitude endeared by recollection, but again attracted to the object before me with a force of pathetic appeal which it is impossible to resist. My kind readers must bear with me, as they have often done; and now they must strive to accompany me, in thought and spirit, to the scene whither I am wandering: for it is one of deep and solemn interest to those who contemplate it aright.

But what bright importation from a distant land is this, to which all our world of native flowers is to give place? Indeed, it is no exotic, no stranger from a foreign shore; it is as simple a Buttercup as ever bent beneath your tread in a sunny meadow with its broad, downy leaf, and attended by one little half expanded blossom. It was the only flower I could find

upon the spot, and I gathered it half reluctantly, for the place seemed almost too sacred to be robbed of the simple ornament. Man had raised no trophy there, no cenotaph, no tomb, no slab; but this flower, uncommonly rich in the depths of its golden tint, reposed upon the mount which had gradually swelled with the heaps of mortality deposited below, until it concealed in that particular place, six or eight feet of the wall beyond it: the memorable, the monumental wall of Derry Cathedral.

It had for a series of years been one of the dearest wishes of my very heart to visit this spot: but familiarized as I was with the tale of 1688, I had never looked upon Derry, nor approached within a hundred miles of its proud old wall. With what feelings, then, did I at last behold the beauteous Foyle, lying in rich repose beneath the bold magnificent chain of Enniskillen mountains, its full tide shining under a calm evening sky, with here and there a pleasure boat or fishing-smack spreading its sails to the light zephyr of July. Our approach was from the Coleraine road; and for a full hour I gazed upon Lough Foyle, and the swelling line of the graceful mountain tops beyond, ere, rising to the left, appeared the lofty and substantial spire of Derry; while, by slow degrees, the maiden city herself became distinctly visible, seated as a queen upon her hilly throne, and forming altogether an object as beautiful to the eye as the associations connected with it were thrilling to the heart. At least to my heart, which throbbed even to aching with the excess of joyous emotion, as I passed

—oh how warm a friend ! under the gateway, where hosts of enemies thundered in vain for admittance during the dreadful siege of nearly eight months.

Many pleasant days I have spent at various places, the remembrance of which will be cherished while I live ; but of the days that I passed in Derry, no hour can be forgotten. Whatever gifts the Lord in his wisdom may have withheld from me, one, in rich mercy he certainly has bestowed : and that is a clear view of the privileges, an earnest desire to fulfil the duties, annexed to the sacred name of Protestant. I know what Popery is : I can discern the fearful names of blasphemy that cover it from the tips of its crowned horns to the cleft of its blood-stained hoofs, and the abject extremity of its scorpion tail. Within and without I behold the brand of anti-christ ; and equally in its lamb-like bleat and its dragon roar, I recognize the hateful strain, ‘dishonour to God in the highest ; on earth desolation ; perdition to men.’ And in my soul I believe, that to “pray for the peace of Jerusalem” can only be effectual, yea, can only be sincere, as it is indissolubly united to the firmest mental determination of holding ‘no peace with Rome.’

And with these feelings I entered Derry, where I then thought, and am now most fully convinced, that an actual miracle had been wrought for the preservation of these realms from the hovering curse of Popery. I speak it deliberately, from a careful and leisurely survey of the ground occupied by the assailants, of the citadel defended by the assailed, and of the forces respectively employed. From the highest

point of the steeple, which itself crowns the summit of the hill, and to which the spire has recently been superadded, I looked round, having in my hand a plan, drawn and attested by those engaged in the conflict, by means of which I could point out the precise station of every troop, every fort, every gun almost of the army, which, with the exception of the open course of Lough Foyle towards the sea, completely surrounded the town, rendering the approach of succours from any landward quarter morally impossible; while across the channel, within a short distance, and distinctly visible to the naked eye, where the Foyle is narrowed for the space of a few yards by the approximation of two opposite points of land, was placed a boom of solid timber, the thickness of a horse's body, bound with iron chains, and made fast to either bank. It never entered into the calculation of friend or foe that any vessel would make head against this barrier; and General Kirke, on the mere report of it, relinquished all thought of attempting to relieve the garrison.

I dwelt long, and with intense emotion, upon the surrounding scenery: in point of mere natural loveliness, I should think it has no fellow; for that noble water, after flowing within its mountain bound to the foot almost of Ship-quay Gate, takes a graceful bend, roving round two-thirds more of the city, in the form of a very broad majestic river: while, beyond it, and on the western side, rise the most beautiful slopes, richly cultivated, adding as much to the picturesque grace of the peaceful landscape now, as they formerly

did to the terrible advantages of the assailants, to whom they afforded such a commanding position, that the little city lay seemingly at their mercy, even as a weak lamb within a ring of butchers. But the Lord spread an invisible shield of miraculous protection over her, on which, while striking at the victim, they did but blunt their whetted knives. "Oh that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness; and declare his wonderful doings to the children of men."

My first act had been to attend the morning weekday worship in the fine, but simple church. It is a cathedral: but the service performed there is that of a parish church. I am not ashamed to own that I took with me the remains of a cannon ball, broken in half by coming in contact with some more stubborn substance, in the bombardment of the devoted town; and laying it on the bench I acknowledged, with tears and thanksgivings, the great and marvellous work by which, within those walls, God had preserved the gospel to those realms: for all must know, who do but glance at the map, that Derry once secured, such aid would have been thence poured into Scotland already armed and disciplined in formidable insurrection, as must have terminated in the re-establishment of James on his abdicated throne. Surely, he in whose sight a thousand years are but as one day, beholds the hardness of their forgetful hearts, who come to worship in that temple, and praise him not for the deliverance.

But the flower:—I descended from the roof where

the crimson flag had waved by day, and the signal fires had blazed by night, to move the heart of the pusillanimous Kirke in his distant anchorage, to attempt the succour; and where many a tearful look explored the bending line at Culmore, in longing expectation of approaching aid; while two cannons stood as sentinels over the sacred edifice, to cover the defenceless worshippers below; I went to the burying-ground that encircles the noble church, and there pondered over the results of eight month's mortality within the walls; the circuit of which is so incredibly narrow, that had I not paced them many times about, upon the broad and beautiful path that lies between the outer and the inner barrier—full sixteen feet in width,—I could not have believed the statement made by the historians of the seige. Within this space, measuring 1500 feet in the longest, and 900 in the broadest part of the town, no less than thirty-seven thousand human beings were enclosed, of whom seven thousand were military, and the rest inhabitants, and persecuted protestants who had fled there for shelter. Of these a poor remnant alone was left, to welcome the long-deferred succour; and I pressed, not with a careless or unthinking tread, the graves of the many many thousands who had there found a resting-place for their weary bones, racked as they had been with pain, and laid bare by the extremity of famine.

There was no room for imagination to work: no thought could embellish the naked fact, for thought itself could scarcely grasp the awful reality. So

thickly had the dead been crowded there, that the light covering of earth left to press them down was frequently displaced by the enemy's shot, and the lifeless bodies themselves torn up by bursting bombs, presenting to their heart-sick survivors the horrible spectacle, and detaining them, as they left the house of prayer, to re-inter those ghastly mutilated fragments of what had been so dear to their bosoms. I could not but feel that this spot where I stood, when I had slowly mounted the hill of the slain, had a voice in every blade of grass that sprung from its surface, asking the careless Protestants of this generation as they pass by, 'Have these suffered so many things in vain?' On one side an open iron railing alone separates the church-yard from the broad terrace of the rampart wall; and a fine old bastion lies beyond it, which covered Ferry-quay gate, the first that the intrepid apprentices closed in the enemy's face. Such a multitude of exciting recollections, mingled with sad forebodings of what is to come, crowded on my mind, that I cannot analyze or arrange my thoughts; I can but look on the little yellow Buttercup, carefully preserved, and summon to my view the scene where I gathered it; then glancing at a grape-shot and a small cannon-ball, which were dug from those graves at the interments of a later generation, beseech the Lord to awaken from their perilous lethargy the slumbering Protestants of this deluding day.

But is there no individual recollection combined with this little flower? There is one, strictly apper-

taining to the scene, which illustrates the indifference of modern Protestantism. I am no advocate for expending sums on the vain records of mortality; and a commemorative column, or costly monument, is grievous rather than gratifying to me. Why should we give the dead a stone, while the living members of Christ want bread? Yet where gratitude has fixed a memorial of great national services, I am not one who, to save a few shillings, would let it moulder into oblivion.

There was, at the time of the siege of Derry, a gentleman whose family possessed, and do yet possess, local importance and political influence in the neighbourhood. His name was David Cairns: he rendered most invaluable services to the afflicted Protestants, was one of the active defenders of their fortress, and by his judicious counsel contributed as much as any individual to the general cause. He was the first to encourage the Apprentice Boys, in resolutely prosecuting their plan of resistance; and after examining and assisting to strengthen their little fortress, he repaired on a hazardous journey to London, to represent the cause to William of Nassau; nor would he leave the court until he had obtained a letter of approval from the king, with the promise of speedy succour. The narrative of his services remains, cut in most distinct and legible characters upon a stone of very durable texture which marked his grave. I found that stone broken into three, of which the central part, containing much of the inscription, had been taken as a piece of waste

masonry, to prop up the slab of some neighbouring tomb; another division lay, thrown by, in a stonemason's yard: and the third was lodged, by the sexton's care, in some part of the church. I must confess, that when, after glancing towards the splendid column raised on the walls to the memory of George Walker, on which, indeed, is engraven also the name of Cairns, with those of others who distinguished themselves in the defence, I looked again upon the grave of that zealous Protestant, despoiled of its simple but honourable testimonial, of which a fragment lay before me, I felt that something was wanting of the grateful respect that ought to cherish such memorials; and I longed for a day's local authority in Derry, to accomplish what might be done with little labour and less cost, by rivetting together the dissevered, but still perfect fragments, and building them into the church wall. Such a deed would better express the feeling that should be cherished than the gift of a new monument. It would commemorate alike the services of the individual, the honour put upon him by his grateful contemporaries, and the reviving spirit of Protestantism among their descendants.

But memorials will never be wanting on that spot where the rankly rich soil, in defiance of the frequent disturbance of its surface, rapidly spreads again a mantle of green, brightly embroidered with the daisy pearl, laced with golden butter-cups, and pencilled in the soft blue of the pensive forget-me-not with inscriptions more touching than all the *hic jacets* that the sculptor's chisel can engrave. Like those who

moulder beneath, they have now faded away : their little season is past, and the long grass waves there alone, until returning spring shall renew the fairy decoration. There is a touching coincidence between the ashes that from year to year mingle below in an undistinguishable mass of mortality, and the flowers that successively bloom on their frail stems above, and scatter their withered petals when the little day of their sojourn is over, an unmarked contribution to the swelling mound of what has been so fair, so fresh, and so precious. It is beautiful to see how, where the hand of man has placed no covering of stone, or when the perishable memento has crumbled away, the tender green blade and the sweet wild-flower volunteer, as it were, to stand sentinel over that which is but lent, not given, to the devouring grave, and clothe the naked soil in such a vesture as man with all his ingenuity could never weave. There is a sympathy neither imaginary, nor accidental, to be found in what is called nature, with the little joys and short-lived sorrows of man, that bespeaks the tender mindfulness of Him, who knowing that we are but dust, remembers our frame, and condescends to adapt his glorious works not only to our wants but to our feelings. It is not possible to linger long in a village church-yard without being compelled secretly to acknowledge this ; for there the abundance of rural scenery renders that a very garden which would otherwise be but a charnel-house. Rarely, however, does a city afford such a contemplation ; still less a sea-port town, and one like this, noted for centuries as a place of strength and

commercial importance, where, within the space of half-a-year, we can number from ten to twenty thousand of victims committed to the narrow house of her dead.

It was in a pleasant meadow, gently slanting to a transparent rivulet, and lying outspread beneath the sunbeam, that first I crept upon the dry grass, filling my little lap with butter-cups and daisies, each budding thought as bright and simple as the treasures I had culled. It was under a cloudy sky, while every blade and leaf hung heavily down beneath the weight of recent rain-drops, emblematical of many an intervening year of my life, that from the dwelling of the dead I bore away this solitary blossom, the thought that pressed upon me being as sombre as the scene. Yet a secret link unites the two epochs, as I look upon the dried but not faded flower; and I wished no sorrow untasted, no thorny path untrod, that combined to lead me, under such impressions, to the precincts of Derry Cathedral. It is now no season for dallying with fanciful imaginations in the sunshiny parterre; we have darker scenes before us, and severer tasks to perform. Woe to us, if we trust in our own wisdom, power, or skill, and call not upon the Lord for help: woe to us, if, while calling upon him, we either deaden our hearts to the demand for personal effort, or withhold our hands from working toward the accomplishment of our professed desires, for the extension of the Lord's kingdom where Satan's seat now is!

CHAPTER XV.

THE GERANIUM.

AMONG the things that I have most frequently noticed, and for which I cannot account, is the endless diversity of taste, as regards that luxury of creation, the colouring of natural objects, or perhaps I should say the natural colouring of objects. Many good people, I know, nice people too, and amiable, who if you point out to them something on which all the glory of divine tinting has been lavished, will smile, with a benevolent pleasure at seeing you pleased : assent in an easy way to the justness of your admiration ; look for a few seconds in the direction pointed out, and then transfer the careless gaze to any other thing, without betraying a consciousness of having lost any gratification by so doing. This renders my garden enjoyments rather unsocial : for although nobody can help assenting to the remarks called forth by those exquisite productions of Almighty skill—unless indeed some cynical mortal whose miserable satisfaction is promoted by checking the delight of others—still it is hard to meet with those who can luxuriate in the petal of, perhaps, some very common flower, so richly as not to make

me dread the imputation of an affected extravagance, if I allow my own delight to appear. Has any reader, whose eyes perform their office rightly, failed to notice the perfection of beauty contained in an autumnal combination which few can avoid stumbling upon : a large, full cluster of ripe, black grapes, with the untouched bloom purpling each luscious globe, and a bouquet, basket, or pyramid of double Dahlias? If this has escaped your scrutiny, gentle friend, bear it in mind, when the season again comes round, and try whether the utmost stretch of your imagination could suggest an addition, in the particulars of form, colouring, shading, and finishing off, as the artists term it, to what you have grouped. This spectacle, however, partakes in the character of the season : though spotless white, gleaming yellow, glowing scarlet, and airy lilac be mingled in your collection, still, if you impartially admit all the prevailing tints of that splendid flower, you will confess that less of summer brightness than of autumnal seriousness pervades the whole : it is more solid than gay : but still beautiful, so exceedingly beautiful that you may marvel at the miracle of love which has placed such an object in your sin-defiled path through an evil and rebellious world.

But brighter scenes were in my thoughts when commencing this paper : flowers and fruit alone, lovely as they are, do not comprise the charms of colouring which it puzzles me to see any one regard with mere acquiescent approval. The British Museum would be my refuge, during the winter months, only for the chilling effect produced by the sangfroid with

which I am obliged to see many an eye run over the most dazzling objects, in the mineral and zoological departments especially. There are specimens of ore, crystalization, and gems that might almost be expected to cry out against those who cast on them a furtive glance, and walk on: and there is plumage adorning the smaller families of birds, that surpasses gem and flower, inasmuch as it combines the most exquisite beauties of both. I might specify those among the race of humming-birds which really add the highest lustre of the emerald, the ruby, the topaz, the amethyst, to more than the downy softness of the damask roseleaf. I look up and marvel, as the delicately formed head of the giraffe raises above me on its elegant tapering neck, to a height that makes the tallest man a pigmy: I look forward and tremble, as the whale's huge jaws unfold their memorable portal, or the rhinoceros points his spear-like horn, or the formidable tusks curve upwards from the skeleton elephant: but I look down, and rejoice, with a full flow of adoring praises, when those countless colours that laugh to scorn the thought of imitation, gleam upon me from that minute compendium of all glorious loveliness, the little specks of humming birds, intermingled as they are with larger specimens of what man cannot do, at the end of six thousand years: but what God did in one short day at their beginning.

I have seen them on the wing, far across the Atlantic, where the swiftness of their motion scarcely allowed me to catch one flash of their gorgeous dyes. They were like those 'things unknown,' which the

poet's imagination sometimes 'bodies forth,' and then loses the sparkling thought before he can give it 'a local habitation and a name.' I was told how to catch the flitting gems; but I would almost as soon have pulled, if I were able, a star out of the sky: and often did I plead for them with those who felt not my scruples. These were days of earthly sorrow and suffering, and spiritual darkness, when fancy alone ministered the delusive opiate, where heavenly balsam was unknown and undesired. Fancy has long since been discarded, as a worthless quack, laden with poisonous drugs; but all the beauteous things of creation seem doubly, yea trebly endeared: their loveliness grows upon my sense, and rejoices my heart; and those which were always jewels to the unsanctified mind, are now, with the burnish of a tenfold lustre from the hand that formed them, the mystic gems of Aaron's breast-plate, made holy unto the Lord, and presented before him as a pledge of his own faithfulness towards the Israel of his choice.

This is an entire discursion from the legitimate subject-matter of my paper: but the reader shall know the nature of the *Ignis fatuus* that has led my pen astray. Perched upon its little ivory stand, just before me, is a *bona fide* humming-bird, so far at least as the outward form and plumage constitutes the creature, excellently stuffed, 'with wings outspread, and forward breast,' and I really do not know what precious stone, besides the emerald, might venture to gleam beside it: for, in addition to the very concentration of living green covering the head and breast,

there is, upon the throat, what seems to have been caught from the sun's disc, when he sinks in burning crimson behind a mountain's peak. If any one is kind enough to bestow her pity upon me, for falling under the fascination of a stuffed bird, not half so big as our smallest wren, I accept the gift; and gratefully return it, with interest; for pitiable beyond my powers of computation, is the individual who could resist it.

The garden is dreary now: frost whetted a bright sword on the evening of the sixth of November, and triumphed, despite of the warmth diffused by our fireworks, which the reverence due to the Lord's day had prevented our discharging on the fifth. Those who were happy enough to be under ministers neither afraid nor ashamed to acknowledge the merciful interposition of the Most High,—twice repeated to mark the day more emphatically as one of national and individual deliverance,—raised high the voice of devout thanksgiving in what would, but for that interposition, now have been temples of idols, with the abomination that maketh desolate standing where it ought not. Those who for reasons best known to their spiritual guides, were denied the privilege on which they had calculated, the enjoyment of which was secured to them, as they considered, by the law of the land, while by the law of God its use was made an imperative duty—those disappointed Protestants, thus unexpectedly coerced into an apparent crime of ingratitude and apostacy, from which their inmost souls revolted—I suppose, assembled in their own

homes as many as could be there accommodated, and went through the whole of that beautiful service appointed for the day, consoled by knowing that the Lord accepts at the hand of his people not according to that which they have not, but according to that which they have : that he saw they were not consenting to the purpose and deed of such as despised the ordinance ; and that they would rather have performed the most wearisome pilgrimage to join the flock of another minister, than have entered the door of their own church, on that morning, could they have foreseen even as probable, such a violence to their conscientious feelings.

Truly we live in sifting days.

Well, on Monday the bonfires blazed, the squibs exploded, the rockets ascended, and one would have thought the atmosphere was warmed for the next four-and-twenty hours : but Jack Fröst, as he is familiarly called, though one can hardly see how he is likely to gain any thing by flattering the ultra-liberalism of the Ins, took a decided part against the Outs, and cut down that night not only all my remaining dahlias, but a whole bevy of green-house plants, entrusted till the morrow to the treacherous unsafe keeping of an open harbour in my garden. ‘Ah,’ says the prudent reader, ‘if you had been housing your plants instead of encouraging your boys to flash gunpowder in the face of her majesty’s more liberal lieges, this would not have happened.’

Very true : I thought of that at the time. But be it known to you, my sage friend, that, dearly as I love

flowers, and doubly precious as are at this season, those which would smile upon me here when all without is dark with clouds or white with snow, far, *far* dearer to me is the privilege of using any means to keep alive in the young hearts of those boys a continual remembrance of whatsoever bears upon this subject. "When I was a child," says Paul, "I thought as a child, I understood as a child." The imagination and understanding of children are sooner reached through such simple observances: our forefathers were not the fools we are pleased to consider, and tacitly declare them to have been. My plants were cut off: but, by the blessing of God the boys will grow up to be better plants than they; and the Lord grant that each of them may plant his foot upon the rock of true Protestantism, and that the voices which merrily huzza'd the rockets shooting through the air, may be lifted in the loudest, fullest tones of manly power to shout the song of holy exultation over the rescued souls whom they may be chosen to snatch from the iron furnace of Antichristian Rome!

'This is a chapter on birds, or a chapter on gunpowder; but what has it to do with your favourite theme of flowers?' Patience; amid the wreck of my little store one plant escaped, and with it a full tuft of bright blossoms. It was a small scarlet geranium, which seems to have thought its British regimentals demanded a bold stand against Jack Frost. I freely confess that while writing the foregoing, I have felt rather more pugnacious than properly accords with the usual subjects of these papers: but the recollec-

tions appertaining to the GERANIUM will smooth down all asperities, and here I summon before me the bushy profusion of one stout old plant of the horse-shoe kind, as it stood in the low, wide window of Jane W.'s neat little cottage bedroom, an object on which my eye so often fell, both by day and by night, that I seemed to have a particular acquaintance with each several leaf. Jane was a smart, pretty girl, whose smiling face and plump figure alike expressed the good-humour that characterized her disposition. She had lived as nurse-maid in the happy home that for a time sheltered me; and her special charge was the youngest-born of the beloved brother whose presence made that home so happy. The short season of domestic enjoyment closed: the household were scattered in various directions; and Jane became the wife of a young peasant. I was not aware of her location, until a year after her marriage, I was asked whether I knew how ill she was; and whether, as she had been a thoughtless, lively, though always strictly modest girl, I did not think it would be well to visit her. On enquiry, I found that I had only to cross about a mile of the wild, beautiful heath that bordered on my dwelling, to reach her abode. I went, and in one of the neatest cottages for its size that the hand of rustic love could have prepared for a blooming bride, I found her, in bed, in the inner of the two apartments that composed the house. Nothing could exceed the joyousness of her welcome, when beholding me, accompanied with one of those whom it had been her province to tend upon in former days; and followed by the dumb

boy, always a special favourite of Jane's. I was delighted by the warmth of her reception, but startled to behold the change in her appearance. She had been rather coarse-looking, with an embrowned and freckled complexion: she was then fair as a lily, with a tint too beautifully glowing on her dimpled cheeks; and the flashing brilliancy of her dark clear eyes oppressed me. She told me that she had been ill, dangerously ill, from exposing herself to the chilling air on a damp day, before she was sufficiently recovered to leave her room with safety: that her baby seemed also to have taken cold; 'but now,' she added, 'I am getting quite well again, only the doctor wishes me to keep still a while longer.' 'Well, Jane, you cannot do better than obey the kind doctor's directions: and, meanwhile, if you like it, I will come and read to you something while you are laid by.' 'Oh, pray do, ma'am: it is so pleasant to see you near me; and to see them also,' looking at Jack, and at the little one beside me. Recollections not to be suppressed suffused her eyes with tears; and I felt that I must have recourse to my precious companion, the Bible, which I drew forth, and without further preface commenced reading, I think, the eighth chapter of St. Matthew.

On the other side of the bed, sate a very respectable-looking woman, whose appearance greatly pleased me: I remarked that when I began reading, she drew back, and concealed her face behind the curtain. Having finished, and received from Jane many smiling thanks, with an earnest invitation to come again very soon, I withdrew, followed by the woman before-

mentioned, to whom, when fairly out of Jane's hearing, I anxiously said, 'Do you think, nurse, that she is in no danger?' 'Oh ma'am, I fear she is in great danger, but she does not suspect it: the inflammation has fallen on her lungs. Many a sad hour I have passed beside her; but, oh, how joyful I felt when you took out that blessed book, and my child seemed delighted to listen to it!' 'What, are you Jane's mother?' 'I am, and she has been the child of many prayers, I may say from before her birth, both to her dear father and me, but we have never yet seen any token of spiritual-mindedness in her. Will you carry on this work in the Lord's name, and tell my poor girl of the Saviour, who, I do trust, will have her yet?' 'God be praised,' said I, 'If I have the prayers of Christian parents in the work, I will never, the Lord helping me, give it up from this moment.' I returned to my post next day: Jane was flushed and restless, and her welcome more than cordial. 'I hardly thought you would come again this hot day: but mother was sure you would.' She gave a bad account of her chest and side; and seemed to delight in telling me her case. When I drew out the book, she evidently prepared to listen more through respect and gratitude, than from any inclination for that employment: but a look of deep anguish from her mother had told me the tale of present danger, and I resolved to proceed decisively. My first object was to convince her of the necessity of a new birth: but she seemed rather to dislike the task of examining herself in the character of a corrupt child of Adam.

I then proceeded to that most precious portion of God's word, which I have seen blest far beyond any other : "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," &c. and went on to describe, in the most vivid manner that I could, the scene in the camp of wounded Israelites, with the remedy provided, and the various ways in which that divinely appointed remedy was received or rejected. I never can forget the extraordinary change that came over Jane's fine countenance while she listened. For a time she had kept her eyes on my face, and, through the shooting of frequent pains in the chest, and perhaps a want of interest in the matter, she had tossed about, and changed her position many times. After a while, just as I endeavoured most pointedly to transfer the type, to the glorious Antitype, and to express the sublime simplicity of the command, Look on the brazen serpent and live—"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," she withdrew her gaze from me, and raised it with an intent look to the vacant space between the bed's foot and the wall, as though she had been contemplating some object there, while the former restlessness of her body gave place to the stillness of death, I thought at one time she had totally withdrawn her attention : and gently asking, 'Are you tired, Jane?' received a fervent grasp from the hand that rested on my arm, a look, quick as lightning, and an almost vehement 'No.' A glance over the pillow shewed me the mother, her hands clasped, her head bent forward, and such a look fixed on her child as none perhaps, but a mother could give. This

roused me to redoubled earnestness ; I spoke to Jane, personally. I told her of the Saviour whom *she* needed, the ransom paid for *her*, the certainty of acceptance if she came, the inevitable consequences of refusing the call. After that I prayed : and by that bedside I sat and read, and prayed, every day and every second night, for nearly three weeks. Rapid was the sinking of this dear girl ; and very dreadful her bodily sufferings ; but nothing were they compared with the depth of self-abasement in which she lay at the foot of the Saviour's cross ; the acute anguish of an awakened conscience—awakened too by considering the vastness of the price paid for her redemption, and measuring her guilt by its expiation. ‘Pray—pray,’ were the first words with which she greeted me, ever after that day. ‘Pray—pray,’ was the last sob of her expiring breath : and after she was so reduced as to be unable even to whisper that word, she managed to point with dying finger to the spot where I used to kneel ; and her glazing eyes were restless until, though so exhausted I could hardly bend my knee, she saw me there in the attitude of supplication. She gave but one unequivocal proof of that confidence which we so longed to discern in her mind ; when her poor little baby, suffering almost as much as herself, was laid to her dying cheek, for the mother's last kiss, she prayed, ‘Oh, my Saviour, take my baby too ! Let my baby come with me to heaven !’

The last few moments of her mortal existence were marked by a character of the deepest peace I ever

witnessed—calm, solid, settled, conscious peace. She became most beautiful: a nobleness of expression overspread her countenance, and the last sign for me to kneel and pray seemed rather one to kneel and praise. She laid her head on her dear mother's shoulder, and with a look of indescribable energy and sweetness, breathed out, 'To my father.' Some of the bystanders interpreted it as a message of love to her earthly father: I think it was meant otherwise. Be that as it may, we had no misgivings, no fears, no doubts. Her parents remarked that the way in which the word of salvation had been sent, together with the message of death was too striking for us to mistake it. She lies in the rustic grave, with her dear little baby close by: it lingered and pined, under the tender care of its excellent grandmother, in her comfortable house—for they were highly respectable people—but Jane's prayer had been accepted, and the little infant followed her to heaven.

The homely horse-shoe geranium will ever be dear to me, above many of its brighter brethren: for it formed the curtain of Jane's little window, and was a cherished favourite of hers. I scattered some of its flowers over the beautiful corpse, and rejoiced in the wonderful work of Him who had planted her, a tree of righteousness in the garden of his glorious kingdom.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DAISY.

IF I were required to decide what in the kingdom of God's visible creation, commonly called nature, is the most heart-cheering spectacle, I should be inclined to say, the first demonstration of awakening life among the vegetable tribes, that have been slumbering in death-like torpor and naked desolation through the wintry season. Sure at least I am, that when, as is often the case, the eye which last looked abroad upon a dreary landscape of spreading snow and leafless sticks, escapes the confinement of a sick room to take its next survey where, under the warm, bright beam of a clear sky, the little buds are perceptibly swelling into magnitude against a sunny wall, while here and there perhaps a bold leaflet ventures to hold up its green mantle to the ray, and closely bedded in their circlet of crisp, pale leaves, the primrose and polyanthus peep forth, without yet venturing to rise upon their stems,—sure I am that the sensation which thrills through my frame is more pleasurable than the same objects in any other stage of their wonderful existence have power to impart. Always delightful,

in all their associations, are the sweet children of the garden, the hedge-row, and the grove : but nothing is so touching as the first pledge of the approaching spring. It leads the mind at once, and with affecting power, to that sure word which, if the promise of God *could* be made of none effect, our sins—my sins—would have provoked the withdrawal of: that seed-time, and summer, and harvest, equally with winter, shall not fail. Though every man be a liar, God is true : though we daily deny him, he continueth faithful, and cannot deny himself. The cloud, the storm, and the snow-drift, the inundated path, the black unsightly soil, the withered skeletons of shrub and tree, these are what we may receive as our portion, and be thankful that the bursting torrent, the rending earth and volcanic fire are not superadded, to requite our obstinate rebellion. But while we go on to sin, to forget all his benefits, and neglect his commands, the Lord is not to be turned from his purposes of mercy. “He hath said, and shall he not make it good?” The appointed season comes, and the mighty work that has been progressing unseen begins to manifest itself in the gradual change of gloom to sunshine, torpor to animation, sterility to luxuriance, and the swarthy aspect of an uncultivated expanse to the endless variegations of vivid green, bedecked with every tint of glowing beauty.

These are thy glorious works, Parent of Good !

What a miracle of madness is that which characterizes evil man—“God is not in all his thoughts.”

None of us can plead exemption from the charge : our admiration of these exquisite creatures is often, very often, unmixed with a reference to the Creator. Science will examine their wonderful mechanism, without giving instant and continual glory to the wisdom that devised it, and taste will revel in their exquisite tints, independently of the skill that pencilled them. Even those who by grace are enabled to see God in every thing, and love to retain him in their minds, have many omissions to deplore. I, at least, have ; and how poor, how unsatisfying is the gratification enjoyed at such oblivious seasons, compared with that which fills the heart when viewing all as a type and a promise of what the same Almighty Being who forms, and nourishes, and clothes the flower of the field, will do for me !

In earliest spring, when—

Awakening nature hears
The new-creating word, and starts to life.

there is a family of great extent and diversity, ever among the first to spring up, the most eager to occupy the ground, and the most tenacious to retain possession of it. I have often mused at the quiet alacrity with which the humblest of this lowly tribe, the Daisy of the fields, lifts up its little face to smile at the sun : and often when the scythe has passed over the lawn, and left no vestige of the merry-looking crew, I have exulted in the speedy appearance of another reinforcement taking the field, as numerous and as resolutely as their predecessors.

There is a singular beauty in this flower, even as it grows wild among the grasses, not to mention the high degree of diversified elegance to which the cultivated species will attain. I admire them all: but constantly prefer the playthings of my infancy, which, seated on the grassy hillock in front of my father's parlour window, I was wont to gather in my lap, as they grew profusely around me, and to string in garlands to adorn my doll's bonnet, or my own neck, or to entangle the dimpled hands of my smiling brother. Perhaps this association is the most universally admitted of any that we can connect with the vegetable world. Who, as a child, has not filled a little bib or basket with these inexhaustible treasures—and who that has, can refuse a smile and a sigh to those sun-shiny hours of unclouded and unfettered enjoyment?

No one denies the symmetrical beauty of the Daisy; and its radii of pure white, from a centre of rich gold, often tipped with a shadowy tint of purple, may challenge comparison with most flowers. The character assigned to it by general consent, as that of humility, modesty, and sprightliness: to these I would add constancy, perseverance, and a habit of looking upward that cannot be overcome. No sooner does the sun's first beam touch the verge of its domain, than the daisy's eye is opened wide, and instantly fixed on the regions of light, until, in needful repose, it is shut for a time, but never averted. The daisy turns not earthward: though not a beam be in the sky, thitherward its aspect is fixed; and the earliest ray of morn-

ing streams into its joyous bosom. It is not often that we find a character among God's children worthy to be classed with this flower ; but such I have known : and one of them I will record, though the daisy may be identified with her in these pages before one has had time to unfold upon the grave where her venerable and beloved head now sweetly rests until the resurrection day. A month has not passed since she was dwelling on these little chapters, because the happy old man remembered there as the purple crocus was one whom she well knew, and had often encouraged in the Lord ; little did she, or we, anticipate that just when the crocus should begin to rear its head above the rugged soil, her soul would be in that kingdom whither our dear brother's had taken its flight just twelve months previously. This mysterious visitation that has recently fallen so heavily on the aged and infirm, bore a summons to her gentle spirit, for which it had long placidly waited ; and four days sufficed for her passage from comparative health and vigour, through the painful stages of acute disease, into the never-ending felicity of her heavenly inheritance.

I know not when, or by what means, this gentle flower was first brought into the Lord's garden. My abode was fixed in her neighbourhood some years ago, and she was pointed out to me as one who peculiarly delighted in the shining of the Sun of Righteousness, by the husbandman then carefully tending that part of the vineyard. I found her all that I had been led to expect : and often, very often, was my own weary spirit refreshed by even exchanging a few short words

with her : while a dear friend whose custom it was to pay a regular weekly visit to the old lady, assured me that next after the ordinances of God's own house she found the greatest spiritual comfort and encouragement in the society of Mrs. S——. Aged, and so infirm, in one respect, as to be unable to swallow a particle of solid food, her only sustenance was a small quantity of milk : and perhaps this diet had produced some effect on her appearance : but however that may be, a creature more delicately soft and fair I never beheld. There seemed an atmosphere of purity around her, independent of the exquisite neatness of her person and apparel : and often, when I have met her on the way to the house of prayer, the joyous cast of her happy countenance, together with the peculiarity that I have just named, imparted to her little delicate figure the very character of a modest daisy, smiling back to the skies the sunshine that they gave. It was my delight to run and proffer my arm, though she never lacked the careful attendance of some affectionate relative ; and when I left her at the little side-door of the church, at which she preferred to enter, I was overpaid by some expression that dwelt on my mind long after. The last that I remember was, as she fervently clasped her hands and looked up, ' His house— Oh, what an honour ! ' And she entered it as one who esteemed a day there better than a thousand elsewhere.

Mrs. S—— never lost that happy mark of a satisfied soul—cheerfulness. She was ardently affectionate to all whom she numbered among God's children ; and never happier than when encouraging them to trust,

and not be afraid. Her zeal for the conversion of others was unbounded, deep, fervent, serious. She not only knew that out of the fold of Christ is neither joy nor peace, but that within it is the abundance of both. "Quietness, and assurance for ever," she saw written on its doors; and much did she long to see the whole human race entering thereat. In station she was most respectable, the mother of several sons, all prospering in their callings, and fondly beloved by them and their offspring, for whom I well know that she unceasingly wrestled in prayer with God: rejoicing with joy unspeakable, when an answer was sent, and any of the family brought to lay hold on eternal life, by faith in Christ Jesus. Humility, was however, so strikingly interwoven in her character, that she evidently esteemed herself the least of all, and servant of all who loved her Lord. Yet she could reprove, and that most effectually; and when her zeal for God's holy cause, and affection for those whom she loved for his sake, were roused together, her faithful rebukes were calculated to make the stoutest wince. She was full of energy and animation: "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might," and among scriptural characters I should have classed her with the Apostle John, a Boanerges, but full of love. A sweet observation of hers has been related to me by another aged pilgrim, who delighted in her. This lady going to visit Mrs. S. found her as usual, busily engaged with her bible; and on remarking the happiness of her employment, received this reply: 'Yes,

I have a sweet flower-garden to refresh myself in : I have only to pass from border to border to cull new beauties. And what makes it so very charming is, that the sweet flowers are always fresh and vigorous.' Her parting salutation was, 'If we meet no more on earth, may it be our happy privilege to meet in heaven—and oh, what a re-union that will be !' On earth they were indeed to meet no more : but sisters in the like precious faith, the eternal re-union will be theirs. A very few hours under the severe visitation of the influenza sufficed to prostrate her delicate frame beyond the hope of its being again raised in this life : and her dying testimony was given, after she had been in a state of insensibility that seemed to preclude any farther speech. Her friend, whose cherished weekly refreshment was to be no more enjoyed, had read a few verses to her from John xvii. her darling study, and observing 'These are precious words of our blessed Lord ;' 'Yes,' answered the dying believer, clasping her weak hands together, 'Yes, Christ is my only hope : he is my all in all.'

And thus she passed away from us. It has been my lot to close the eyes of only three among the cherished objects recorded in these little chapters. Perhaps this circumstance increases the interest imparted by the chosen type : but it is a precious privilege to witness the believer's departure, full of the hope which maketh not ashamed. Poor, however, is any consolation, under the bereavement of objects dearly loved, compared with that afforded by the

inspired apostle, who bids us "comfort one another with these words." And what words are they? That they who sleep in Jesus shall the Lord bring with him, when he descends from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God—that all his people, caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, shall be **FOR EVER** with the Lord. It is the sure and certain hope of that eternal re-union that makes each succeeding meditation on departed servants of Christ more delightful than the preceding : because another portion of time has elapsed since last we thought on them, and by so much is eternity the nearer. Oh, the blessedness of making our own calling and election sure! What are the dearest forms of earth but a crop of smiling daisies, about to fall before the mower's scythe? It is true that as 'friend after friend departs,' the Lord, in compassion to human infirmity, gives us others, to gladden by their love and sympathy the otherwise desolate path; but cold and forgetful is the heart that clings not to individual recollections, hovering over each solitary grave, and realizing David's sorrow, "He shall not return to me." No, the beloved form shall never more appear on earth; the endeared features shall not again smile affection on us, or the well-remembered voice utter tones of encouragement. "But I shall go to him," rejoins faith, and sorrow is turned into holy joy. Those who are with Christ—surely it is sweet to go to them, and to join in their song of praise. Surely we may well bide the

pelting of a few storms on earth, though our way may be lonely, and our path dark, in the assured prospect of a rest where neither storm nor darkness, nor sorrow can enter : where the former things shall have passed away, and all be created new ; gloriously new, and everlastingly glorious.

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CHAPTER XVII.

THE FALLEN OAK.

MANY and overpowering are the recollections excited by a glance at the tablets of former days. Perchance a leaf of an old pocket-book—perchance some lively letter, or familiar note, coming unexpectedly to hand in a search for something else, where the eye falls on a name, then in hourly use, now numbered with the things that have been. The individual almost starts into life before us, just as we last beheld him, occupying his assigned place on earth, surrounded by all the ties that formed his happiness here. Another rapid movement of that mysterious engine, thought, and we shrink from the consciousness that all those ties are broken—his place knows him no more—his portion of earthly things is just so much cold clay as suffices to shroud his mouldering bones in the darkness of the tomb. The memento so suddenly beheld is no less suddenly laid aside; and a wish will rise that it had not intruded when the busy mind was in quest of somewhat that, by pre-occupying it, unfitted it in a measure for the startling reminiscence.

But how different is the feeling when perhaps the

same recollection of the same individual is awakened in the quiet moments of a leisurely stroll through the open space, whose boundary is the blue sky above, the green sod beneath, and the graceful forms of diversified vegetation flourishing around! There, all is in keeping: though the flowers be gone, and the sky overcast with driving clouds, it is still beautifully in keeping when the image of some lost friend flits before the mind; for "man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble: he cometh forth as a flower and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not." Types and allegories seem to accord, almost universally, with the taste of our species. The young child stretches his infant faculties more readily to grasp the truths conveyed by such a medium: the most unlettered of men, who could not follow a plain argument through two short sentences, will accompany Bunyan's pilgrim to the end of his journey, with evident relish of the savour with which that exquisite book is replete: and in the languages of nations considered savage, the wild Indians of the woods particularly, we find little else than a compendium of tropes and figurative expressions. The Holy Scriptures need not be cited as a perfect model of this parabolic style; and, look where we will, through the broad open pages of creation, dull indeed must be the eye that fails to catch the same character, pervading them in every part. For the business of life, the cares and efforts requisite to keep our worldly matters even, the study, the closet, the counting-house are valuable auxiliaries: but in the hour of relief from

the pressure of occupation, whether the bent of the mind be to joy or sorrow, expectation or disappointment, to meditation or devotion, give me my beloved haunt—the garden—and I cannot fail of finding that which, in the absence of all human sympathy and companionship, shall charm away the loneliness of feeling; shall heighten my joy, or soothe my grief, with sweet tales of One who is never far from the heart that desires to acknowledge his sovereignty.

The season is bleak: and what between the unlooked-for snows that heralded November, and the hurricane that marked his exit, few indeed are the flowers left to bide the blasts of the closing year. But flowers I need not: my steps are arrested in the search by an object more suitable to my purpose, and near it I linger, absorbed in thoughts as sweetly solemn as ever followed the flight of a glorified spirit to its Father's bosom. A noble oak, seemingly arrived at the last stage of its natural existence, had been, I cannot say torn up, but rather broken off with scarcely a discomposure of the earth around its roots, and there it lay, recumbent on the sod which had yielded to its pressure without apparent injury to either. Majestic when last I saw it full of life, and loaded with its leafy honours, it looked to me no less majestic in its wintry state, leafless, and unadorned, stretched peacefully on the earth, so long overshadowed by its spreading boughs. 'Here, then,' I mentally said, 'here let me stay my steps; for what spot so meet can I find whereon to pause and think over my

pleasant reminiscences of that beloved man of God,
CHARLES SIMEON ?

There is not one feeling of a spiritualized mind that may not flow on unchecked, in full luxury of enjoyment, while tracing the work of God in and by that blessed servant of His. There lives not a flower, a shrub, or a plant that could so exquisitely typify the man as this fallen king of the forest, by whose trunk I seat myself, to follow up the resemblance. Here it first shot forth the young roots of its growing strength : here it attained a vigorous maturity, while succeeding crowds sat under its pleasant shadow and rejoiced. Here it faded into venerable age, and fell at last by the same breath which so long had nourished it ; fell quietly, so ripe for the blow, that nothing is disordered around it—there is no rent, no chasm : a vacancy indeed there will be when its frame is removed and out of sight—a vacancy *felt* by many a one, who in the stormy or sultry hour will habitually turn hither, saying, Where is our ancient friend, our pleasant shelter ? But who can tell how many of the noble trees extending all around owe their being to this parent stock ? For an uncomputed period it has flourished here : and perhaps those stately buildings—perhaps yon gallant vessel that may be bearing seaward a freight of missionary treasures, owe their frame-work to the progeny of this tree. Sure I am that its prolific boughs have yielded seed for many an acre of forest plantation ; while every little leaf that fell assisted to fertilize that rich and smiling sward that carpets the spot.

And so it was with Simeon : where he first vegeta-

ted in spiritual existence, there he flourished, and there, honoured with more of reverential love and regret than usually falls to the lot of man, he calmly reposes. Generations have successively sat under the teaching of his faithful ministry, acknowledging him to be indeed like a tree planted by the waterside, bringing forth his fruit in due season, while his leaf withered not; and in a most singular manner was fulfilled the promise—"Look, whatsoever he doeth, it shall prosper." Ob, if all the rich ones of this world, or even the rich ones of the Lord's own fold, would so consecrate themselves and what they have to the service of their master as did that highly-favoured man, what a blossoming Eden we should have in many and many a spot where the howling desert now meets our shrinking sight! The recollections of what he was, and what he did, come crowding with overpowering force. So eminently did he act upon the solemn charge, "Go, work to day in my vineyard," that no one can be pointed out, since the times of inspiration, better worthy of the too-much-neglected title of a working Christian. His was not the faith that dances like a moth about the candle, doing nothing but dazzling its own eyes, and perhaps endangering its own wings by too presumptuous an approach; no, he used every beam of that shining light as a hel to read his Master's will, and to do his Master's work, and to illuminate the darkness of those who were yet afar off, and to whom his incessant, fervent, persevering invitation, given as largely, as fully, as universal-

ly as the need of a Saviour exists, was blessed to an extent only to be revealed at the last day.

“Blessed is he that blesseth thee” reiterates the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, to them; and with an undoubted reference to their now outcast race. Of this blessing our beloved brother now knows the value and extent. I passed not many days in his honoured company, but some three or four at one time I did: and truly can I testify that of these days scarcely an hour fled by without bearing on its wings some record of his heart’s desire and prayer for the conversion of God’s ancient people. For many years I had especially loved his name, as standing so conspicuously forth among the actual pityers of Zion, who longed to raise her from the dust: and very sweet it was to be so circumstanced as to time and place, when sojourning under the same roof with Mr. Simeon, as to see his warmest zeal called forth in this sacred cause. He was so active, so earnest, so open, and withal so very playful, that had he been an utter stranger in name and character I should have marked him among a thousand, as one to whom the statutes and work of the Lord were the very joy of his heart. But he was no stranger, though I was one to him; and a weeping stranger too, whose peculiar trial, just then, appealing to all the sympathies of his warm and generous heart, brought me more within the influence of his personal attention than otherwise I could have hoped to be admitted.

A few weeks—not a month—had elapsed since I buried my precious dumb boy: and the debility oc-

casioned by long, anxious attendance on him, joined to the grief of such a loss, and other afflictions just then accumulated upon me, rendered me an object of even more than usual tenderness to the fond friends whose guest I was. The master of the house was indeed a devoted brother in the faith and the ministry with Simeon, still more endeared by long friendship, and by fellowship in the work for Israel. They are now together with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, and the cup, not of cold water, but cordial wine of Christian love, so freely ministered to a fainting pilgrim, is not forgotten now. No sooner did dear Mr. Simeon understand the cause of my sable weeds and tearful looks, than he set himself to comfort and to cheer me.

There was something so peculiar in the physiognomy and manner of the venerable good man, he was so long and extensively known among Christian people, that many will be able to realize the very look and gesture with which he used to beckon me to sit close beside him on the sofa, and then opening a large bible, resting one half of it on his own knee, the other on mine, he would say, 'Now let me hear something of your happy dumb boy.' The subject was too near my heart to be strange to my lips, and he had not long to wait. Ere I had proceeded far, one hand was laid on my wrist, the fore-finger of the other held up, and, 'Stop—stop' articulated in a leisurely manner. Then he would turn over the blessed pages, until he found some scripture most beautifully, *most exquisitely* illustrative of the thing I was relating ;

and that he would require me to read aloud to him, keeping his finger under the line, carefully pausing at the respective stops. When it was done, he would look in my face, with a gentle inclination of the head, saying, 'Now'—and so continue, until something else called for another reference to the word of God. All around were smiling at the scene: it was so quaint, so perfectly characteristic of the man: but none can tell how delicious was the soothing to my really lacerated heart, as I felt the pressure of his fatherly hand on my wrist, met the complacent look of his intelligent eye, marked the interest excited in his mind by the turns of his singularly expressive mouth, and followed the movement of his finger along the precious lines of inspired consolation, and *knew* that whither the 'happy dumb boy' was gone, there should his own bright spirit follow ere long. I remember too, that I was never more anxious to read correctly than when reading those short passages to him; and yet never in my life was man's applause or censure more utterly indifferent to me. Although there was eccentricity enough in Mr. Simeon's character to force a smile from the most devoted of his reverential followers, there was enough of authority, decision, and confidence in his own powers of guiding, to compel respect from the most giddy and inconsiderate.

Our parting breakfast was very delightful: there were present a son and daughter of God's ancient Israel, both become doubly the children of Abraham by faith in Christ Jesus—the one a zealous preacher of his adored Messiah; the other a fond and faithful

wife, rejoicing that he, the best beloved of her heart, had been made also the means of saving her soul. Towards them every feeling of our venerable friend seemed to set in, so to speak, with a spring-tide, strong enough to overthrow every thing before it. He quite sparkled; and often did he speak to me and bid me rejoice, as I sat beside him, in the joy of those children of Jacob. It was one of the special privileges allowed me in that house to take every day a glass of wine, actually made from the grapes that grew on the mountain of Lebanon. Of this my beloved host had a supply: and never did he fail of filling my glass from it. I drank that wine of Lebanon with Wolff, and with many a son and daughter of the chosen seed; but never with greater relish than when Mr. Simeon pledged me in the draught. It is so solemn—so sweet—to know that he, and our dear brother whose hospitality had no bounds, have indeed sat down together to sup with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We cannot quite realize the mighty truth: but now and then a glimpse seems to be given into that presence-chamber where **THEY ARE**; and what are the puny thorns and idle pebbles that somewhat discomfort our path thitherward, when we dwell upon the glorious fact that they **ARE** there!

Once more I saw, and spoke to, Mr. Simeon. He recognized me in a meeting, not very large, held in a room in Regent street, for one of our dear Irish educational societies. He ran to me: and sorrowfully told me that our dear friend H. above referred to, was

ill, very ill. He then seated himself near me ; and I shall not soon forget the sequel. At that time Mr. Irving had not long been led to propound his fearful heresy respecting the human nature of our spotless Immanuel, but he had said and done enough to startle all thinking Christians ; and I suppose the various errors and delusions set forth by him and his followers never had a more determined, uncompromising enemy than in Simeon. Contrary to all expectation, Mr. Irving chose to address the meeting : and in the midst of a speech unexceptionable enough, he called on the assembly to pray with him : then turning to the noble chairman, requested him to second the proposal. Lord B. quite taken by surprise, rose, not with a very well satisfied air, and silently bowing round, intimated in that way that we should also rise. I confess that I was one who felt exceedingly disinclined to obey ; not knowing what that gifted, but most erring individual might think proper to utter, as the mouth-piece of the party. But the expression of Simeon's countenance who could pourtray ! he rested his elbows on his knees, firmly clasped his hands together, placed his chin against his knuckles : and every line in his face, where the lines were neither few nor faintly marked, bespoke a fixed resolve to say Amen to nothing that he had not well sifted, and deliberately approved. It was an extraordinary scene altogether, and I made my exit as soon as this episode came to an end. I never more beheld Mr. Simeon ; but I shall hope never to forget his look that day. There was in it as much of

sober reproof, exhortation, and caution as a look could convey.

He was the marked reverse of a theorist: *his* speculations touched not the unrevealed mysteries of God, but bought churches, and entailed pulpits on such ministers as should faithfully set forth the known word and will of the Most High. I should say that the motto of his life was, "Let him that heareth, say, Come." I hardly think he ever folded a bank-note, or fingered a guinea, without pondering how it could be made available in spreading the gospel. And then he had such a downright, hard-working, pains-taking, unceremonious way with him, that he seemed to go about such things with the same matter-of-fact sort of sober earnestness that a carpenter would exhibit who when planning a piece of furniture, resolved it should be the best of its kind. He had a very summary and somewhat annoying way of disposing of subjects that seemed to him impertinent: with no small infusion of acidity, if he thought them anti-scriptural: and few men might better judge of that than he could.

But how wretchedly poor is the sketch! I have rested and refreshed my mind on the few personal reminiscences of that blessed man, even as my body is rested and refreshed by a temporary seat near this noble oak: but how shall I send my mind abroad, to gather into one view the innumerable, wide-spread, ever-multiplying fruits of his active holiness! Confined in his stated ministry to one beloved spot, and mounting for half a century the same endeared pulpit,

to what quarter of Christ's militant church on earth has his voice of love not penetrated, his helping hand not reached? 'This tree may have planted many a forest, lent its aid to works of art, manufacture and commerce, beyond the possibility of computation, though here it lies, too completely worn with age to yield even a plank from its own trunk: but in the sod under my feet how many even of its this year's acorns are at present germinating, to break forth next spring in beautiful abundance for culture here, and transplantation to other soils. Yet accord to it, as a tree, the utmost limit of usefulness in its generation, our dear brother, as a Christian, far over-steps it in the multitude and magnitude of his fruits. Oh, that we may be quickened by the consideration, to bear in mind the words of our Lord, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit!" Fireside piety, closet piety, are of such moment that without them all the rest is nothing; but we are too prone to think they alone will suffice. Regard, then, Charles Simeon, who after a long—very long life passed in the most laborious, public service of his Master, would have told you that he was an unprofitable servant, a miserable offender, leaving undone what he ought to have done, and thrown on the sparing mercy of God in Christ to pardon the iniquity of his holiest things, the fearful short-comings of his most diligent services. Ponder on this, and ask what will be your feeling, if you wrap up your talent in a napkin, only to be taken out to refresh your own gaze, and barely to exhibit

before the Lord, when you ought to be earnestly trading with it. Oh, for a company of working Christians like Simeon! the armies of the aliens should soon be put to flight, and the church, clothed in her beautiful garments, become a glory and praise in the whole earth!

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE WHITE CHRYSANTHEMUM

UNDER all circumstances, sickness is trying : but the extent to which its painful communications may be alleviated or aggravated is very great. I would not dwell upon the wide distinction drawn between the cherished individual whose every want is foreseen, whose every wish anticipated by watchful friends, while no earthly care is allowed to burthen the mind, nor anxious thought required to be taken—and the mother of a young family who has no efficient substitute to fill her arduous sphere during the hours of languishing ; but who must rouse her weary spirits and exert her bewildered faculties on behalf of others when both require undisturbed repose ; nor will I dwell upon the contrast presented by the child of abundance, amply provided with this world's good, free from that corroding thought for the morrow, which asks, "What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed ?" and one whose daily effort supplies the daily expenditure, and who, during the long hours of reluctant inaction, but calculate by how many of premature and harrassing ex-

ertion must the ground thus lost be regained. These are obvious distinctions, and no one can fail to recognize them : but there are others, little reckoned of by many, though placing a gulf of unmeasurable distance between the actual experience of individuals precisely alike in external circumstances, and visited perhaps with just the same measure of bodily ailment. The sick-bed of believers in Christ is a place where the Lord for a moment dims his jewels, in order to give them a brighter burnish ; and this they know, and struggle to lie still, for they feel that they are in his hand and desire to be no where else. The couch of a person wrapped in thoughtless security, has also a peace of its own ; the false peace of a blind man, who walks on in smiling contentment towards the brink of a pit that he sees not. But there is another sick-bed, alas ! there are hundreds and thousands of such in this privileged land, where, even now while I write, now, while the severity of winter has barbed the dart of disease, and a mysterious hand directed it to strike deep into many a strong frame : the sick-bed of the helpless, hopeless sinner, whose guilty deeds appear in all their crimson dye, with a certain fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation beyond the grave that is evidently yawning to receive him. This is a wide and varied class ; not a few such are writhing in pangs that they conceal from others, who little suspect their existence there ; not a few are battling with conscience in desperate hardihood of purpose, or swallowing the poison of delusion from lips too ready to speak peace where there is no peace :

but I am now, in thought, dwelling on a single though most awfully numerous branch of that wide class of unequivocal transgressors who cross our daily path in all the successive gradations of their sad career ; from the bloom of youthful beauty, gaudily tricked out in flaunting display, to the squalid spectral object whose pale cheek, hollow eyes, trembling limbs, and tottering gait, proclaim for how very short a period she has yet to drag the wasted half-clad form along ere it must sink where ours shall mingle with it. Yes, however high we may toss the disdainful head, however far avert the loathing eye, however cautiously protect the utmost verge of our garment from coming into contact with her defiling tatters, we shall mingle at last— mingle here in one common mass of corruption ; and mingle hereafter in one mighty throng of animated existences, gathered for judgment before the eternal throne.

It was marvellous in the eyes of Simon the Pharisee that Jesus suffered a woman of the city, who was a known sinner, to touch him ! Tear after tear dropped unrebuked upon those holy feet, from eyes that had lured many a soul into the paths of death ; and tress after tress was applied to dry those drops away, that had oft been braided with gold and pearl, for the express purpose of ensnaring those whom he came to deliver. And I bless His holy name, he has so far taught me that I dare not pass a poor lost sister of my own vile race without remembering that touching scene, and feeling as though to me was addressed the comprehensive appeal, “Seest thou this woman ?” I

have in my garden a flower that bears on its leaves a memento I would not willingly forget; and when I see the long pale, disshevelled, petals of the white Chrysanthemum shaken wildly by the gale, while its slender stem is bowed, and its sickly-looking leaves hang down, in helpless resignation to its comfortless lot, I think of the little cottage where it stood hard by the door, to plead with me, as it were, for one within, of whom it seemed the most affecting type that could have been devised.

It was then winter, comparatively mild, but still winter, and very few of the flowers had survived even in that sheltered spot. The white Chrysanthemum, however, was not quite alone; but so accompanied as to throw out its peculiarly fading and forlorn character in more striking relief. Close behind it on the cottage-wall, peeped forth a few glowing china-roses, with a cluster of vigorous buds; and some double marigolds spread their rich, deep, golden hues at its root. Not far away stood a dwarf holly, be-dropped with scarlet berries; and whatever remained of flowers and foliage partook so largely of that firm texture and decided tint which conveys the idea of health and enjoyment, that the poor Chrysanthemum looked the very personification of a sick, sorrowful, trembling stranger, in a circle where sickness, sorrow, or fear might rarely intrude. The place was one where my assigned duty would have called me, but I had been ill; and a dear young friend, ever ready to the work of Christian love and pity, had supplied my lack of service by a prompt response to the summons that she

received. Deeply affected by the account she gave me, I now accompanied her, not to interfere, but to witness her efforts: and very rarely have my feelings been more painfully excited, or my indignation more strongly provoked. Ascending to a very small neat room of the little cottage, I saw on a bed a young woman of no ordinary share of beauty, not, apparently much changed by illness, with a bright glow on her cheek, and a fire in her rich dark eye, and a smile playing round a very lovely mouth, so unlike what I had expected to behold, that I knew not how to account for it. However I sat down on the bed, while my friend, sitting nearer the pillow, bent over the sufferer, addressing her in gentle tones, and in the sweet language of the Gospel. For some time she spoke unheeded; at length the bright eyes were raised to her face, and a transparent trembling hand was stretched towards her head, while the words—‘Let me look at your bonnet, Miss. Pretty bonnet!’ Emma yielded to the request, at the same time sadly observing to me that it was not a lucid interval, and then I saw the extent of the calamity, as regarded this world—reason had fled.

While the poor maniac amused herself with the bonnet, and with her sister’s little infant, which she tenderly noticed, I learned the particulars of her story. The family was poor but respectable; and all had gone out to service excepting Bessie, who remained with her parents, taking in needle-work, and frequently so employed for the various shops in London. At the age of eighteen she was suddenly missed from

home ; and no tidings could be heard of her until four years after ; when, in the summer, she came down to that cottage on an unexpected visit to her sister, who had married an industrious man, and passed a day with them. A gentleman accompanied her to whom she evidently was not married ; but as she was handsomely dressed, and came in a post-chaise, and appeared in high spirits, and as the *gentleman*—for such, in rank he was—treated her with much affection, and behaved to her humble relatives with great affability, the poor people, culpably ignorant of their duty, forbore either to question or remonstrate with her, and Bessie returned, promising them another visit.

The promise was fulfilled, when six months after she was again brought to their door in a post-chaise, the driver of which delivered a letter to the sister, and while she was reading it, departed, leaving Bessie. In this letter the *gentleman* stated that the poor girl had been very ill ; that change of air was the only thing requisite for her recovery ; and earnestly implored them to give her lodging and nursing until she should regain her health. Attention being turned to the poor creature thus thrown on hands little capable of assisting her, it was discovered that she was raving : and also that the thrush had broken out in her mouth, with other symptoms so fatal that the medical man, who was hastily called in, at once declared her to be dying. She had, in fact, been confined for three weeks to her bed ; and the inhuman seducer, who had first stolen her from her home (which broke the hearts of both her parents) and retained her in world-

ly abundance on guilty terms for four years, no sooner found her thus becoming a burden on his hands than he had her taken from her bed, to encounter the rough blasts of a severe winter's day ; and so exposing her to almost certain death, sent her to those whose daily labour could but just scantily feed their own little ones, to suffer all the privations inseparable from such a change : even if, as was very near being the case, the irritated feelings of one on whom poor Bessie had no claim, did not provoke him to deny her the shelter of his roof. A sister's love, however prevailed ; and she was tenderly nursed ; while the lucid intervals, long, but not frequent, were diligently improved by my dear young friend, with an earnest desire for the salvation of her soul. How far the Lord might bless the means of grace under which she was so singularly brought, it is not for us to say : but we were not left without hope concerning her. At first, when my friend spoke to her of the compassionate love of the Redeemer, shewing forth the exceeding riches of that grace for which all are invited to plead—the fulness of that pardon which, in Christ Jesus, is offered to the vilest of sinners—she seemed to consider it rather a mockery as of woe than an encouragement ; for she fixed on the speaker an incredulous look, saying, ‘ Oh, don't talk so to *me*, Miss !’ By degrees she became less reluctant to listen : and after hearing much more to the same effect, she grasped her visitor's hand, saying, ‘ I should not be afraid to die *if I might* go to heaven :’ then added in an agitated manner, as Emma rose to go, ‘ If you will come to see me again, you

will be *my dear*.' The visit was repeated often; and once or twice, at her urgent request, was her kind teacher sent for when reason was perfectly awake: but only four days intervened between her first arrival and her entrance on the eternal world. I saw her a second time, and then the colour had left her cheek, the fire was quenched in her eye, the smile had departed from her swollen lips, and a character of restless discomfort was upon her vacant countenance, while faintly, but fondly calling on the name of her destroyer. It was then, sadly contrasted with the healthy peasants and blooming babes around her, that she became so identified with the Chrysanthemum under her window as to leave a lasting impression on my mind, ever to be revived as I look on the flower. A few hours before her death Emina saw her speechless, and nearly motionless, but perfectly sensible, and expressing by such signs as she could make, a wish to have her sent for. When asked if she felt a hope that her sins were pardoned through the Lord Jesus, with a request to hold up her hand if she did, she raised it as far as she had power to do; and this, with the fixed, calm, affectionate look with which she received her friend's last farewell, and the character of perfect peace spread over her countenance, was all that we had to build on, as to the state of her feelings. The evident fact that she had never before heard of Christ as an all-sufficient Saviour, and that she heard of him gladly, afforded more solid grounds to hope that he had sent the poor wanderer there to be called into his fold. But he has left a

veil upon the work which human hand cannot lift : and far rather would I on this, as on other occasions, employ the little knowledge that I have in proclaiming to sinners the exceeding love of Him who died for them, than in prying into matters which will be fully revealed when faith is swallowed up in sight.

The story of Bessie C—— is that of hundreds, yea of many thousands around us, as regards her first deviation from the path of moral rectitude. Had her sickness not been fatal, and had her sister's home afforded her no refuge beyond the period of her illness, what would have awaited her ? A state of comparative luxury must have rendered distasteful the humble fare of a poor cottage, and the daily drudgery by which even that fare must have been earned would have been intolerable. It was plain that the seducer had forever abandoned her ; and, if unrenewed in spirit, it cannot but be believed that she would have sought in the wages of guilt those worldly comforts and gratifications that had become necessities in her sight. Another step, and another, in the downhill path of that awfully rapid descent, would soon have brought her to the level of the most repulsively abandoned and lost : and disgust might have prevailed to avert the pitying eye, to withdraw the outstretched hand, and consequently to restrain the pleading voice that told of a refuge from everlasting destruction—of a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, and a heaven purchased for the very bond-slaves of hell. It is dreadful to reflect that the more desperate the case becomes with these wretched wanderers, the

more reluctant we are to pause in their path, and bid them turn, and flee to Jesus.

My garden would be but a poor preacher, if it had nothing to say to me on behalf of my erring sisters: and the sentiment that could have wept over Bessie, still blooming, and in appearance, not only gentle but modest, yet would turn from another homeless outcast, because she is almost brutalized by similar vice and frenzied by despair, cannot be Christian sentiment. It is the mere romance of excited feeling, ready to assume the colour of religion, but it does not emanate from it as an effect from its cause. We can, as it were endure to take, through a vista, a dim and distant view of what we shrink from contemplating more nearly. The full reality, more broadly displayed the actual extent to which vice and cruelty hold unchecked their appalling sway over the lower classes of our population, in and around the larger cities, would almost quench the very breath of prayer for this guilty land. The glittering sword of vengeance would be seen suspended over us, and the awful voice be heard, "Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

I could have told a sadder tale: I could have led my readers into a deep and noisome cellar of dark St. Giles', and curdled the blood in their veins, even though I had left untold the half of what I have there beheld on a dying bed: but I forbear. My object is to plant a thorn in their consciences, that they may not rest in peace and fancied blamelessness, while cal-

lous to the hurt, the deep and deadly hurt of the daughters of her people. "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is not the hurt of the daughters of my people healed?" Yes, there is a balm in Gilead; there is a Physician, a Healer, alike ready to hear, and omnipotent to help. But they, poor wounded ones! know him not; no man directs them to seek Him; no man cares for their souls. They go astray, they fall, they perish: they lie in hell like sheep. And one by one, as the wretched victims pass away, the finger of him who overlooks no living soul is pointed to her, and the now unheeded voice that must and will one day be heard and answered, repeats the emphatic question: "SEEST THOU THIS WOMAN?"

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CHINA-ROSE, OR THE BISHOP.

THERE was once a feeling in the Church of England that seems to have faded into a remembrance of the past, rather than to be a thing of present existence. I allude to the veneration in which the chief pastors of the flock were held, when, casting off the iniquitous mystery of darkness that had shrouded them in the imaginary sanctity, and armed them with the real terrors of a perverted and polluted pre-eminence, the bishops of the Reformation stood forth, arrayed in the garments of holiness, and walking in the light of an unveiled gospel. The brightest burst of sudden spring over a naked and storm-wrecked landscape scarcely typifies that revival. The wilderness and solitary places of our land were made glad because of them: the blighted desert of Antichrist rejoiced and blossomed as the rose. The soft notes of the dove were heard, breathing peace and tenderness, where the coiled serpent alone had hissed, and the ravening lion had roared after his prey. Then it was that an offering was made to the Lord, even the offering of the heart willingly yielded to Him, and a pure incense

of 'praises with understanding' supplanted the impure smoke of a debased carnal service. Then it was that the good bishops threw open the doors of their habitations, not to close them again on the secret conclave of priestly underplotters, assembled to devise plans for rivetting ancient fetters, and forging new ones for the flock, but to invite their brethren to mutual encouragement in their work of faith and labour of love—to strengthen the weak, comfort the persecuted, exhort the unruly, and confirm the wavering. Not to dazzle the laity with a display of pomp and pride abhorrent to the spirit of the gospel, but to nourish the bodies of the poor with the meat that perisheth, and to supply their souls with that which nourisheth unto everlasting life. Then the bishop, robed in his gown, with the flat-crowned doctor's cap on his head, and the long beard imparting additional dignity to his aspect, moved in meekness and gravity along the lofty hall, seeing that his humble guests were properly cared for, and waiting to bestow the ghostly counsel that, severally or together, they desired to receive at his hands.

Such was the spectacle displayed when a Ridley, a Hooper, a Latimer, or a Cranmer presided. Their light shone before men with a pure and mellow lustre, illuminating and warming wheresoever it fell; until, blending with the short-lived blaze of martyrdom, it was swallowed up in the glory that endureth everlastingly. Then, he that desired the office of a bishop, desired really a good work; and little indeed could the dross of filthy lucre, or the glitter of external

pomp, or the grasp of ecclesiastical power, weigh with men who saw, beyond that vista, the dungeon and the stake.

These times of fiery trial are past ; the manners of that age have given place to others as dissimilar from them as are the present abodes and employments of our prelates from those of their early predecessors : but blessed be God ! the same spirit remains, and he sometimes bestows the heart of our primitive bishops on those who occupy their high places in the church. Often, in very early years, have I wandered among the relics of former days, in an episcopal residence where one of the fiercest and most savage persecutors of Mary's reign rioted in the blood of the Lord's innocent sheep ; and as I marked the rich foliage, the thousand brilliant flowers, that flung their graceful veil over broken ruins, rendering that most lovely which was formerly most sternly obdurate and harsh, I traced the more glorious transformation of the episcopal office—or rather its restoration to that which God designed it to be.

There was a ruined porch in that garden which seemed to have belonged to a tower of great strength. Iron gates had enclosed it ; massive bars had crossed and recrossed the narrow, pointed windows, and from its detached position, within the impregnable enclosure of a double wall, flanked by defensive towers, I never doubted its character of a prison. All however, was then changed as to render it a beautiful ornament to the grounds. No bolt remained : the old grey-stone that had bidden defiance to time, looked

forth between the clusters of ivy and woodbine, and other climbing plants, while the gayest profusion of yellow wall-flower, variegated lichens, and long tufts of that most graceful and touching emblem of mortality, 'the flower of grass,' waved lightly on its broken summit. Roses and jonquils concealed its base; the interior was gravelled; rustic seats were placed around; and the dark prison-house of merciless Rome had become a beauteous summer-bower under the mild hand of Christian culture.

And from among the cluster of flowers, I select the China-rose, the most simple, unostentatious, and enduring of its numerous family: the first, in spring, to open its pale, elegant petals to the early sunbeam—the last to quail beneath the winter's blast. I select it not in connexion with the antique ruin that my childhood loved, but with one whose task it was to preside, first in the spot consecrated by the pastoral charge of the blessed Hooper, and brightened by the fires of his martyrdom; and subsequently where God was glorified in the deaths of several martyrs, Robert Glover, Joyce Lewes, and others whose names are in the book of life. Yes, it was upon a half-opened China-rose that my tears first fell, when, on the second of April, 1836, I first learned the removal to his Master's mansion of that dear servant of Christ, Henry Ryder, Bishop of Gloucester first, afterwards of Lichfield and Coventry.

Few, very few, indeed, if there be even one, among those who read these pages, will fail to recognize a name dear to their hearts in that which I have men-

tioned. Bishop Ryder possessed, beyond most men, the love and veneration of God's people. There was that in his character, in his manners, in his very aspect, that laid hold on the best affections of our nature, and would not let them go. I never saw a man who brought so strongly to mind the picture my fancy loved to draw of a bishop, in the bright, sad days of our martyrs. There was a childlike humility, a simplicity that nothing could tarnish, a meekness that served to render more impressive the animated energy called forth on occasions when this beloved pastor had to plead the cause he so deeply cherished. It is well known that he underwent a protracted martyrdom of feeling—and he was keenly sensitive—when, with the voice of authority, and the louder language of example, he first strove to awaken the slumbering watchmen, and to call in the roving, unfaithful shepherds under his charge. Evangelical truth, though familiar to their lips in the stated services of our church, was a new and a strange and a hateful thing to the apprehension of the great bulk of the clergy, at the time when Dr. Ryder was raised up to enforce it. Known to the Lord are all the conflicts endured by that tender but constant spirit, when, fixed like the China-rose to its supporting wall, he offered himself to the most savage blast of the first break of winter, resolved to shine before men, and to breathe incense to his God, whosoever shrank back—determined, in His strength, to stand, whosoever might fall or flee. Long it was ere the storm of persecution abated; longer ere the gentle hand of spring awoke a

few companions to countenance him in the singularity of his holiness. But the season advanced, and brightened, and gladdened him with a vast number of associates, each in his own form, and his own place, rejoicing to do the will of his Master.

Many of my readers, who perhaps knew not the severity of Doctor Ryder's early trials in the character of a Christian Bishop, must have been struck by the expression of heavenly gladness—so calm, yet so earnest—that marked his countenance, when, presiding over a public meeting, he cast his eye upon the animated crowd of listeners, while his ear drank in the pleadings of some zealous brother on behalf of those who were perishing for lack of knowledge; or the enumeration of successes already gained in the glorious cause. There was a time when he, like Elijah, had seemed alone, in the midst of an unfaithful church: and his joy was that of Elijah, when the convinced and prostrate multitude sent forth that shout, "The Lord, he is the God!" Full of love to the Saviour, and love to his fellow-men, that dear servant of Christ longed to gather into the fold every wanderer on the face of the whole earth; and there was not an effort made, from pole to pole, in which his heart took not an interest most deep, while his spirit went forth to every land, with those who proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation, and published peace.

But there was one portion of a neglected vineyard, which it was the dearest privilege and delight of this blessed man to bind up, and to prop, and to nourish.

Poor Ireland's ancient, rich, and beautiful vine, so long rent down, trampled under foot, defiled, and preyed on by the wild beasts that ravage the land, excited his tenderest sympathies. It was in the prosecution of this work that one whom I had long revered at a distance became the object of nearer and more devoted regard; and few among many privileges were more prized than that of being saluted as friend by the good bishop—the unwearied promoter of the cause. Like the China-rose at my cottage door, he thus came under my frequent, habitual observation, and I could trace the resemblance that so beautifully connects him with the flower. At once so gentle, so unobtrusive, so graceful, and so sweet, each knew to endure hardness as a good soldier, uninfluenced by outer circumstances. Each was foremost to take the field, each the most persevering to retain it. Both looked so delicate that it might have seemed easy to overpower them by a shew of opposition: both, leaning on a powerful support, bade calm defiance to the assault. Sometimes my rose-bush has caught me in passing, and when thus arrested I have stood to admire the rich gifts of God in the beauty and fragrance of the tree: even so, by his fervently affectionate appeals, have I seen the good bishop arrest the giddy hearer, and fix him in serious contemplation of those divine graces which he shewed forth while magnifying them as the gift of the Lord.

But man, in his best estate, is frail; and in his most mature decision fallible. Bishop Ryder was carried away by the universality of his loving spirit,

operated upon by the specious pleadings of the enemy who can transform himself into an angel of light. He yielded his assent to the measure that deprived England of her bright crown—he surrendered the stronghold of his country, in a blind reliance on the pledges of that church whose notorious principle it is to keep no faith with those whom she insolently calls heretics. That his having been so deluded was, to the good bishop, a source of deep and abiding regret, I can confidently say: that he looked with abhorrence on the rising rampancy of the Romish church, I know; and that he redoubled his efforts to uproot the abominations to the encouragement of which he had unwillingly or rather unwatchfully contributed, is witnessed by hundreds and thousands, who marked the increase of his zeal in that particular cause. I would not draw a veil over this error in judgment: I would not palliate it. The inspired record affords no example for so doing: and be they still in the flesh, or removed into the presence of the Lord, I say of all who connived at the national transgression, that it was a sin only to be blotted out in the blood of the Lamb. Often, when I have looked on the meek but animated countenance of that apostolic prelate, has my heart wrestled in prayer for him, that God would grant repentance and remission of the sin. I have thought of Peter, when, gifted as he was with so many and bright endowments from above, and honoured beyond others in the great multitude to whose conversion he was instrumental, a brother apostle saw cause to withstand him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

God forbid that I should glory in the grace bestowed on a Ryder or a Wilberforce without a feeling of deep abasement that in this matter they grievously erred.

My china-rose tree is not free from blemish. Where, on this sin-soiled earth shall we find an object wholly untainted as when the Lord first looked upon his finished work and pronounced it very good? Yet among the loveliest of inanimate creatures, that rose is singularly beautiful, and abiding. It throws an embroidered mantle, wonderfully wrought to the glory of divine workmanship, over the unsightly nakedness of man's poor contrivances; and brightens what would otherwise be a scene of unrelieved desolation. Its very weakness is a call for our tender sympathy; for such are we all in frailty—but how few of us are such in the adornments which God has provided, and commands us to put on!

The praise of the good bishop Ryder is in all the churches: there is no quarter of the globe where his efforts have not reached for the furtherance of the gospel: but chiefly on the spiritual wilderness of poor Ireland, and over the wretched abodes of her outcast children in this country, was their influence felt: and surely incense more acceptable arose not to the Lord from the dwellings of man, than the pleadings and prayers that had for their object the diffusion of light and peace, where all was strife and darkness. The memory of that man is doubly blessed, who, while caring for every sheep of his own apportioned fold, stretched forth the arms of love to gather also the

poor wanderers whom few recognized as claimants even on their thought, much less upon their mental energies, and worldly means, to an extent almost unlimited. Scenes more recent, names more immediately before the public, may throw into comparative shade those that have passed away : but I am not so weaned from what I have loved and venerated :—I delight to pause in my walk, to number the unfolding blossoms of the China-rose, and with a swelling heart to ponder on the memory of one who is transplanted to a fairer garden—the good bishop Ryder.

CHAPTER XX.

THE YEW-TREE.

If there be one scene more than any other calculated to leave a deep, enduring impression on the mind, and to be recalled with fondness, on occasions when scarcely any other reminiscence is welcome,—it is the scene of a village churchyard in some secluded spot, with its usual accompaniment of a venerable yew-tree. A succession of such pictures I can call up: for my path has lain through divers and distant places; and the landmarks that distinguish each, in these retrospective visions, are chiefly of that nature. Sorrow, in a variety of shapes, has accompanied my steps—a sad but sweet companion, rendered precious by the experience which assents to the wise man's remark, that "it is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting." There has not been a time, since the earliest years of thoughtless youth, when enough of secret sorrow has not mingled with my brightest hours, to impart an attractive character to that house appointed for all living, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

One of these soothing scenes is even now vividly present to my thoughts. An antique church, with its square wooden turret, its short thick spire, and jutting porch, standing on the declivity of a gentle hill, closed in by trees towards the north, and southward opening down to a rich variety of meadows and corn-fields, marked out by the hedge-rows, thick set with noble oaks, elms, and all the leafy denizens of a genuine English landscape. The whole aspect of that place was rural in a high degree; the few tombs that were scattered about lost their cold and formal character amid the luxuriance of the grass and wild flowers, that would not be restrained from shooting up, and tossing their graceful forms around them. The proportion of head-stones, though larger was still very moderate; and of these the greater number were of date so ancient as to be scarcely legible. Their grey moss-grown appearance, frequently half-sunk beneath the swelling turf, was exquisitely accordant with the venerable aspect of the old church. But the favourite species of memorial, (probably because it was more within the means of humble villagers,) consisted of a long board, placed low over the grave, and supported at either end by a wooden post. On one side of this rail was painted the name, age, and obituary of the dweller beneath its shadow: and on the other side sometimes a text of scripture, or an attempt at versification. These monuments were, of course, very frail, and not calculated to endure for many years. However, they served to mark the grave as long as, in the course of nature, the near connexions might

be supposed to survive, whose feelings would be wounded by an invasion of the spot appropriated to their deceased friend. And this appears to me to be all that man can reasonably require at the hand of his fellow. Any attempt to invade the lawful decree, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," is equally vain and futile. It was not many days since I read of the public unrolling of an Egyptian mummy—an emphatic commentary upon the folly of such mistaken care of any poor mortal remains! The sanctity of the grave should be preserved inviolate—they who would invade it are monsters, not men—until sufficient time has been allowed for the perfect decomposition of what was committed to it: and then why preserve an external memento of a substance that has there ceased to exist in its individual character? Why not bow to the penal fiat, and suffer the dust to mingle with its original? I like not to see the burial-ground so unfairly apportioned, as that the rich may fence off, from century to century, a spot where no spade can come: while the poor must be often tossed out of their graves, in visible and loathesome fragments, because of a senseless monopoly maintained by, perhaps, old coffins of many hundred years' date. This, however, is a passing remark.

However interesting in other respects the scene adverted to might be, there was one prime object of attraction to those who visited it: this was the ancient yew, which seemed to be coeval at least with the oldest of man's surrounding works. The tree was singularly fine: its trunk, of large circumference,

was so completely hollowed out by age, that to one who entered the natural alcove thus formed, and calculated the thickness of the outer crust, it was matter of amazement how so slender a support could suffice for the enormous weight of branches that shot out above—or even convey adequate nourishment to those branches. Below, it was to all appearance, a blighted, broken, and crumbling ruin: above, a noble, vigorous, healthy tree, rich in renovated youth, and overshadowing a wide extent of humble graves. Indeed, the very poorest who could not afford even a wooden memorial of their loss, seemed to claim the ancient yew as a sort of natural protector—a monument planted by Him who careth for the poor, to cover their despised remains. I loved to draw the wild plants aside, and peruse the monumental inscriptions, enclosed within their veil: I loved to trace out the remote dates of those old grey head-stones, with their rude carvings of weeping cherubim: and I loved to ponder on the simple, often very touching lines, traced on decaying boards: but my chosen station was amid the cluster of nameless graves overshadowed by the patriarchal yew.

On two occasions I visited this spot, under circumstances never to be forgotten. On the first sabbath after the falling of the heaviest blow that ever smote me, I repaired to that comparatively distant church to worship—to bow before the mysterious hand that had rent away what was most precious to me. This could not be done in a place where I had before attended divine service: the wound was too recent, too agoni-

zingly fresh, to admit of sitting beside *his* vacant seat in the temple where we had so often worshipped together. The path to this retired churchyard lay through a cornfield. When last I visited my favourite yew, that field presented a bare surface, excepting where a tender blade, more forward than its fellows, had here and there struggled through the soil, and looked abroad. On this sad sabbath my thoughts were so confused under their oppressive weight, that I forgot the lapse of time; and finding myself in a field of rich ripening wheat, I turned back, saying, 'This is not the way.' The little gate was silently pointed out to me, and I proceeded. Even at this hour I must again bless the Lord, for what He, who comforteth them that are cast down, then spoke to my heavy heart. It was not long since the seed of divine truth had been sown, by the preaching of the word to that beloved and lamented one: and in the absence of strong evidence (afterwards given) that it had indeed taken root, unbelief was striving desperately within; and asking, "Was there *time* for it to shoot forth?" Here was an answer so scripturally beautiful, that I am never weary of dwelling on the type. As far as weeks and months were concerned, a much longer time had been allowed for the spiritual than the natural growth; and the passage was brought before me with a vividness impossible to describe. It was Jesus himself who said, "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring, and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the

earth bringeth forth fruit for itself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth forth the sickle, because the harvest is come." I might have read the passage a hundred times and not have caught its applicability: but here was the realization—here was the bright golden grain, drooping for very richness its mellow head before me, on the precise spot where I had so lately seen only a cheerless expanse of dull grey soil. The wonders of creative power we make light of, through daily familiarity with their stupendous grandeur; but God does sometimes so reveal to the mourning soul the beautiful link which his own sweet parables have woven between them and the wonders of regenerating grace, that a voice comes, mighty alike in power and in love saying, "Be still and know that I am God." That voice calmed in a moment the tempest of my soul, and He gave me that day the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Blessed be his name! The dumb boy, whose tearful eyes watched every change of my countenance, immediately marked the alteration: he knew not how comfort had been given; but well did he know whence it came: for as we passed the churchyard gate, he made to me the short, but sweet and soothing remark, 'Jesus Christ loves poor Mam.'

The other particular visit was for a purpose scarcely less touching; in some points even more so. The hand of death was upon that boy; and his days were so evidently numbered, that another week seemed the

utmost limit of his mortal existence. I left him under good care, and bent my way, beneath a cold, bleak wintry wind, to the churchyard, to fix on a spot for his mortal remains to rest in, beneath his favourite yew-tree. The design was afterwards abandoned, and another burial-place selected; but at the time I fully purposed to lay him there. How magnificent did the yew-tree look on that day! Mid-winter had stripped every branch beside. Oaks and elms stood bare, with spreading arms, sturdily resisting the gale; and the tall naked poplar waved wildly before its breath. Heavy clouds were drifting, dark and low; while the long, meagre grass clogged with damp, and pressed downward by the sweeping wind, added to the desolate character of a scene that it was wont to embellish with softer loveliness. It was then that the fine outline of the ancient yew appeared in fuller, bolder relief against the sky. Slightly discomposed by the blast, its waving branches only displayed more openly the richness of their abundant foliage. It stood, a green and flourishing thing, where all else was but wreck and deformity. How could I look upon this noble spread of unwithering branches from a poor, decayed, broken trunk, that seemed only fit for firewood, without recurring to the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," that God was preparing for my dying boy, out of the "light afflictions" then working the destruction of his mortal frame, that his spirit might flee away and be at rest! There was a sublimity in that scene and hour, to which no effort of man's hand or head can attain. It was the gran-

deur of a new creation, rising from the emphatic wreck of all below it and around—finding a congenial element in the very breath that blasted the fairest things of earth, and typifying what we are so slow of heart to believe—the persevering grace bestowed by the Giver of every good and perfect gift, on the souls that he has brought out from regions of sin and death. “Son of man, can these bones live?” was the question that made trial of Ezekiel’s faith, when he looked round him on the dry and bleaching fragments of mortality, scattered in the valley. In like manner it might be asked, can this aged, decaying trunk, scarcely retaining substance enough to support its upright position, shoot out the spreading bough, and toss the vigorous branch on high? Even so, likewise, is he who, convinced of the plague of his heart, finds that from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot there is no sound part in him, but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores, tempted to doubt, can God bring a clean thing out of what is essentially unclean? Can he make perfect his strength in weakness like mine? But the dry bones lived, and stood up, an exceeding great army, marching cheerily onward to Canaan. The shattered yew-tree—the wreck of unknown centuries—looked down, in broad and flourishing vegetation, upon many a successive race crumbling among its roots: and the arm of the Lord, almighty to save, is never shortened, nor his power straitened towards the sinful children of men. No feebleness of body, no prostration of mind, can let him when he wills to work. However degenerate the

vine of a strange plant may be before him, he can graft it with a noble vine, wholly a right seed, and crown it with luxuriant fertility.

My last view of the stately old tree—for I never revisited the spot—filled me with such rejoicing thoughts; naturally leading to the glorious mystery of the body's resurrection from its sleep in the dust. Every grave before me was the visible portal of a mansion containing many chambers:—who could tell the number of the departed, within the confines of that ancient place of sepulture! Who could conceive the awful reality of the earth disclosing her dead, and each individually rising with his own body, to give account of the things done therein, during his sojourn here! There lay the worshipper of beings who could not save him: the poor victim of delusion, whose last cry was to some patron saint, and his strongest hope rested in the masses that should be offered for his deliverance from purgatory. There lay the formalist, whose barren orthodoxy might serve the purposes of self-deception to the verge of the grave, but could carry its fictitious aid no farther. The blasphemer was there, the drunkard, the extortioner, yea, the suicide, whose own hand shut fast the door of repentance against himself. And there, too, was the humble believer, who, counting all things but lost for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, won Christ, and will at the last day he found in him, having the righteousness which is by faith of Christ Jesus, and needing nought beside. At such a time and place, how inestimably precious does the gospel of salvation

appear! Blessed be God, that gospel is now proclaimed in the antique village church, and its glad sound rustles through the branches of the venerable yew.

There is yet another touching reminiscence connected with the scenery, on which I love to dwell; but the particulars, if given, must be reserved for a future paper.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE MEETING.

THERE are times and places where individuals are thrown together under circumstances that leave an indelible impression: though not a name should be known, nay nor a face distinguished, yet may the keenest interest be excited. It is difficult to prove this, unless to travellers; and, among travellers, perhaps, to those who have traversed the mighty billows. Of all the meetings or partings that have moved my feelings through life, I remember none so closely united, or so intensely exciting during their momentary continuance, as the greeting, in mid-Atlantic, of a vessel which bounded athwart our track.

For about twenty days we had lost sight of land; and not an object had interposed between the over-arching heavens and the broad line of waters that rose, in the vast circle of a clear horizon, to meet their azure bend, save the little sea-birds which occasionally appeared astern of our large ship, now stepping the waves with playful grace, now perching on the tall mast-head, and anon stretching the wing we knew not whither. The sailors considered the fre-

quent appearance of the birds as indicative of an approaching storm ; but nothing resembling it occurred until our five weeks voyage was nearly ended. The sameness of the scene was wearisome to those who merely regarded the sky as air, and the sea as water, and longed for a more substantial element whereon to expatiate ; those who have closely watched their aspect can attest that in the heavens there is but little monotony, in the mighty ocean none—except during that most tormenting season, a dead calm. I was delighted with the daily view of the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the great deep ; never wearying of the contemplation. Yet when, after floating, a solitary thing, always the seeming centre of an unbroken circle, our ship had pursued for three weeks her appointed way, I was not a whit less delighted than the veriest yawner on board to discern in the far offing, at early morning, a spec, the rapid increase of which assured us that she was upon our track, and gave us promise of a speedy approach. We gazed for a while, and then descended to our breakfast.

A lively breeze that favoured both vessels, though sailing in different directions, had brought us very near before we again repaired to the deck : and had the times been warlike, with an enemy ranging the seas, the eagerness of inquiry could not have been more intense than through mere curiosity it now appeared. What is she ? where from ? whither bound ? and numerous other questions, passed from mouth to mouth, as gravely as though some secret information had been offered to the sundry individuals to whom

they were addressed, on a point where all were necessarily in the dark. Meantime the ship made right for us; we hoisted what has been beautifully called 'the meteor flag of England;' and while its broad folds rose heavily on the breeze, casting a shadow over the sparkling foam behind the rudder, our new acquaintance unfurled her striped flag, studded with stars, announcing herself an American.

It was not very long since the hoisting of those several ensigns would have been the signal for a hostile onset; and the jealousy of that unnatural rivalry had by no means faded from the bosoms of either country; yet, crossing as we then did each other's path, I can truly affirm that to myself and to the greater number of our passengers the vessel seemed to contain the most endeared company of interesting people that we could have met. National distinctions and national animosities were forgotten: we saw the first party of human beings that had enlivened our lonely way for weeks—like us they had left a home behind them; like us they were seeking a desired haven. They were, like us, exposed to elemental changes; an uncertain sky above, an unfathomable depth beneath their feet, and a frail dwelling of boards, which seemed tossed like a plaything on the strong billows that bore it swiftly past. No object is more strikingly beautiful than a ship freely bounding over the deep, when seen from another ship in similar motion. So light, so grand, so majestically true—'her march is o'er the mountain waves,' which she seems to cut with mathematical precision, while rising

on their swell, and yielding to their downward sweep ; her mast with graceful inclination pointing as she reels, her white sails glittering in the sunbeam, her broad banner undulating on the breeze, and so, a glorious gallant thing, she comes and is gone, and melts into a spec, soon to be lost in impenetrable distance.

Thus it was with our transatlantic friend. We neared so closely that every individual on either deck was distinctly seen, while, rapidly trumpeted, the mutual question and answer sounded cheerily across the intervening billows, that hoarsely murmured their own discourse. All pressed to look, and bent to listen ; and feelings of pleasurable good-will were depicted in every countenance. The interview, however, passed like thought ; a very few seconds had spread a long line of waters between us ; the banner of England, no farther required at its post aloft, was lowered upon deck ; and I sat down, delighted to nestle among its cherished folds, to indulge a meditation not so profitable as the same scene would now, through divine grace, afford.

Often have I recalled the beauty of that spectacle, with the interesting concomitants that fixed it so deeply on my memory. I have traced a parallel in the voyage of life, supposing that we have launched forth under the pilotage of ONE who has engaged to bring us into the haven where we would be. A solitary Christian is like a vessel in the mighty main, following the invisible steps of Him whose way is in the sea, and His path in the deep waters. To such a voyager, turn where he will, the point most interesting

is that where the scene of his pilgrimage melts as it were into heaven. The worldly triflers who flock around are regarded but as the idle birds of ocean, portending only storm and shipwreck to him, if abiding in his company. He is content to be alone, if so the Lord will; but should a fellow-pilgrim be brought within his track, of whom he may plainly discern that he also is bound for the haven of peace, how far beyond the mere ties of earthly kindred and companionship is the strength of that interest excited! Though it be but the interview of a few moments, though they part with no probability of again encountering one another on the ocean of life, though in all individual peculiarities of station, rank, name, and circumstance, each continues a stranger to the other, long will the look of affection pursue his receding steps, and the heart-breathed ejaculation ascend with intercessory desire to their common Father, that the brother thus unexpectedly brought within personal knowledge may go on his way rejoicing, and find a quiet port in the land of everlasting rest.

It is here that the real unity of the true church of Christ is manifested: no believer can look upon another believer as one strange to his sight, and uninteresting to his mind. He who by the Spirit of adoption has been brought to call God, Abba, Father, cannot but recognize a brother in each one who enjoys the same privilege: and sad is the state of the Christian whose affections go not forth towards every member of the family of faith! That many such there are,

is too apparent ; and that they are the least happy of God's children is no less plain. If we love not the brethren, we lack the evidence which the Lord himself has pointed out as distinguishing those who have passed from death unto life ; if we love them coldly, mistrustfully, indifferently, it is hard to prove that such a feeling deserves the name of love.

There is an *esprit du corps* belonging to the professors of serious religion, very little akin to that zeal which would lay down its life for the brethren. It is found in partizans of every class ; even among those who are banded under the command of the Arch-enemy, to assail the truths of revelation. There is another species of attachment, passing with many who feel it for genuine love to the brethren ; but which, if traced to its source, might be found to originate in the consciousness that among worldly men the people called evangelicals are held in sovereign contempt—regarded as subtle rogues, or half-crazed fanatics. This is mortifying, and the assurance of it renders an avowed follower of Christ ill at ease among those who so behold him. In the presence of a true Christian he is sure to be highly esteemed for his Master's sake ; and thus complacency towards the brethren may proceed from unmixed self-love, and wear the semblance even to ourselves of that with which it has no connexion whatever. If a vessel at sea, perhaps weakly armed, descries in time of war a strange sail approaching, no doubt the hoisting of a friendly flag inspires delight and confidence proportioned to the evil that might have accrued from fall-

ing in with a powerful enemy ; but who will say that the greeting is one of such disinterested love and sympathy as we exchanged with our fellow-voyager, when no peril was apprehended, nor any advantage to be gained by falling in with her on the broad and peaceful seas !

Evangelical profession in our day spreads wide ; and it is in many places so extremely shallow that those who venture on its seeming uniformity are frequently run aground, and left with damage, to deplore their credulity. This I have experienced ; for more deep and heartless villany never glared from the world's most brazen and unblushing front than I have encountered beneath the smooth aspect of sanctimonious piety. It would be well for the glory of God and the gospel, if all who are similarly deceived would raise a beacon on such shoals, to warn their fellow-believers of concealed perils ; but the false charity which shrinks from exposing one real hypocrite, lest the world should consider him a fair sample of those among whom he has presumptuously numbered himself, inflicts an injury more deep, more pervading and more abiding, than the unmasking of a thousand deceivers would do. Christians are aware that such characters exist among godly professors ; they know that it requires time and observation to detect them, screened as they are by the culpable weakness already mentioned ; and thus a darkening shade of suspicion is cast over the whole body ; and the evil is cherished, until it will act as an extinguisher on the last glimmering light of "love for the

brethren." St. Paul was not uncharitable, when he exhorted the Corinthian church to purge out the leaven from among them : our venerable reformers were not uncharitable when they framed the rubric excluding from the Lord's table such as, having wronged a neighbour, should neglect to make fitting reparation ; but we are truly uncharitable, both to ourselves and others, while we suffer the mere badge of a party, the mere verbal shibboleth of religious phraseology, and the tinkling cymbal of sound doctrines issuing from feigned lips, to deter us from plucking these weeds out of the Lord's garden ; or, if we lack power so to do, from legibly writing "poison" over them, that the children may no longer shrink from wholesome plants, through dread of a concealed sting.

Is then every infirmity of temper, every incautious step, every injudicious proceeding, every lamented inconsistency that the follower of Christ is betrayed into, to be proclaimed, and the stumbling disciple held forth to the church's anathema and the world's contempt ? God forbid ! "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." It is not to the infirmities of real Christians, but to the worldliness, the covetousness, the malignity, the calumniating bitterness of those who have thrust themselves into their company, that we trace the lack of confiding love among God's people. The flesh may so lust against the Spirit in a regenerate man, that he may be be-

trayed into many inconsistencies, and be a perpetual grief unto himself; he is to be tenderly admonished, prayed over, and assisted in the struggle. But when a man is known by those who have studied him well to be capable of destroying a neighbour's character through envy and malignity, or selling it for filthy lucre's sake—when he has been found to make his religious way of talking a cloke for licentiousness, for ambition, and worldly advantage, he ought to be so dealt with by those who are godly, as either to alarm him from his sin or to shame him out of his false profession.

There may be points of natural weakness in a man's character that prevent our altogether confiding in him; but if the life of God be manifest in his soul, by the simple walk of faith and a holy conversation, are we not bound, yea, constrained to love him? The Lord dwells in His church, which is the company of all faithful people; He dwells in them individually; and, as being made temples of the living God, we cannot but honour and love them, for the deity that abides within. Oh how tender, how respectful should we be to all the brethren, if we rightly considered this! We should not grieve, we should not provoke, we should not dare to malign and condemn them, if we bore in mind that the Lord is there.

Meeting on the troublous waves of life, we should affectionately recollect what storms from above may await their onward course—what enemies may be watching around to swallow them up—what rocks may lurk below to make shipwreck of their faith and

conscience. These are touching considerations to such as know the severity of that internal warfare wherein the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, keep the believer tossing and trembling on the waters of a strife that is only to end with his mortal voyage. However incommunicative we may be of our personal experiences, we yet are conscious that fightings without, and fears within, will intrude like the voice of a rising tempest, to mar the gladness of our most joyous hours. Such conflicts as we feel to be in ourselves, we know must belong to our brethren also; and is not this a plea for the tenderest sympathy? Meeting as strangers and pilgrims, uncertain whether we shall ever again behold them until we stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, surely we should bear them, and their probable trials, on our hearts before the Lord, in prayer; and extending the hand of cordial salutation, we should follow their track with the eye of sympathizing love, breathing the language of the sweet Psalmist of Israel, "For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good."

CHAPTER XXII.

IRELAND.

“OH that it were with me as in days past!” is an aspiration which the natural heart of man seems prone to utter, though far apart from the original context. Few, indeed, if any, of God’s people can look back upon that spring-tide season of first faith and love without having cause to ask, with tearful regret,

Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?

But among those who never saw or sought Him, there is a frequent recurrence to past times, as having savoured of happiness comparatively unalloyed. Yet, while that past was still the present, it had, in general, its attendant clouds and discomforts in sufficient abundance to render something antecedent to it a subject of like regrets. It appears that as time rolls on, the anxieties of the day—for the principal drawbacks on our felicity are imaginary evils, and groundless forebodings—pass off, and are forgotten; while the actual enjoyments graciously permitted, leave an indelible record on the mind. I have sometimes tried

under the pressure of great uneasiness, to reduce two scriptural precepts to practice. Forgetting those things that are behind, and taking no thought for the morrow—nor even for the succeeding hour—I have viewed the actual *present* in its naked reality, and found that, like it, my trouble was diminished to a mere point. I perceived that some injury or vexation, recently encountered, was still rankling in my heart: while the anticipation of what was presently to be done or said very much increased the excitement. Banishing both of these, and looking on the passing moment only, standing before the Lord a living miracle of His mercy and long-suffering, with no other positive certainty in prospect than that not one word of His good promise should ever fail, I have actually paused in astonishment at finding how large a portion of what, strictly speaking, was non-existent, entered into the composition of my grievance. These little arrests for close self-examination are exceedingly useful: and if conducted on the right principle, as in the presence of Him who searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men, they are of a very humbling tendency. Ingratitude for the mercy that has wafted one cloud away, and mistrust of the love that presides over such as are yet afar off, will be found interwoven with every murmuring thought of our hearts, breathed in every complaint that escapes our lips. Without the gifts of memory and prescience, we should indeed be as the brutes: still it is melancholy to reflect how constantly we use them as weapons of rebellious ingratitude against the Giver

By applying this rule to the events of by-gone days, I am enabled to detect many a grievous act of sin in what, at the time, appeared but well-founded sorrow—sin that would never have been repented of, because never discovered by me. Often, when all has been bright around me, and the mercy of God was most signally manifested in guidance or preservation, has my heart secretly fretted and raged against His decrees, because the past and the probable future were dark to my sight. I can recall such an instance connected with most endearing recollections, and now looked back upon as the very door of blessings, temporal and spiritual, which may furnish a theme for songs of everlasting thanksgiving and praise.

I will not say exactly how many years since I first bent my way towards the sister isle. It is enough to state that I was then a very fair specimen of national and spiritual pride: both equally groundless. My nationality consisted in a supreme contempt of every thing not exclusively English, with a clause of peculiar scorn and detestation of whatever might happen to be Irish. My spirituality was a deep conviction of being one of the most deserving people living: I read the bible very frequently; I was a regular and punctual church-goer; I said prayers in private, did many good works (in my own estimation) and suffered much evil unresistingly. Upon these things I built such a confident hope, or rather claim, for eternal life that—I shudder to recollect it—I had more than once seen myself in the very jaws of destruction without a single doubt or fear as to my eternal portion.

In this state of mind, I undertook a reluctant journey and voyage, resolved to anticipate only unalloyed miseries. Truth to say, my retrospections were sufficiently dark to throw a fearful gloom over what was to come, in the eyes of one who had not yet seen the purposes of divine love in the chastisement of a proud, self-righteous rebel.

With a bitter spirit, and downcast eyes that shunned the very sight of the land, I obeyed the summons to come on deck, when the packet which had been all day sailing against the wind was moored at the pier of Howth. It was two or three hours after midnight, but a most brilliant full moon threw its soft clear light on every object, rendering any artificial aid unnecessary. A plank was laid from the vessel to the shore, by which the passengers landed; and as the tide was then low, the inclination of the plank was very great—at another time I might have hesitated to ascend the steep and slippery way; but I was heedless, reckless of any thing. No principle of willing obedience led me in the path of duty, but a sort of sullen acquiescence that I dignified with the name of resignation, and considered highly meritorious. I had been so tardy, that I was nearly forgotten—a lonely voyager, without one person on whose kindness I had any other claim than what their own generous commiseration spontaneously acknowledged—and I fancy the sailors had commenced withdrawing the plank when my approach caused them to replace it. I mounted the ship's side, and proceeded about three steps along the narrow footing, when a heave of

the vessel unsteadied it—the upper part began to slide, and in a second or two I should have been engulfed low in the dark waters between the ship and the pier, with scarcely a human possibility of rescue; but one of the gentlemen flung himself prostrate on the ground, seizing with a powerful grasp the receding plank; while a sailor, jumping on the ship's bulwarks caught me round the knees, to support my tottering steps, and another of the passengers, extending his hands, took mine, and drew me forward.

I sprang ashore, with a careless laugh, my usual mask for a half-broken heart; and while receiving the fervent welcome of those kind-hearted Irishmen, heightened into agitation by my recent peril and escape, what was the language of my secret thoughts? Adoring gratitude? No. Neither the watery grave from which I had that moment been snatched, nor the scene of present safety, health, and comfort, nor the soft sweet moon looking down upon the velvet sod, and marking the church tower, and gleaming on the white head-stones of many a rustic grave, nor the animated warmth of those who had so promptly interposed to rescue me—could elicit one throb of right feeling. Dark as the depths where I might have been sinking was my ungrateful spirit; and while I courteously thanked my welcome companions, the breathing of my soul was, 'Would that your country were in the depths of the sea, and I any where else!' But there was one thing that exceeded my rebellion: and that was the mercy of my long-suffering God.

With feelings of undiminished gloom and hatred, I

sat down in the parlour of the hotel, until the morning should be sufficiently advanced to admit of our proceeding to Dublin. With two other passengers, I shared a post-chaise ; and as we approached the Irish metropolis, even my unwilling looks were attracted and gratified, by the beauty of many white buildings, the country seats of its inhabitants, scattered among plantations of exquisite verdure, and reflecting the early rays of a cloudless sun. While descending a hilly road, the horses took fright, the postillion was thrown, and with fearful velocity we were borne along by the unchecked animals at full gallop. Let those who understand the peril of my deed judge of the reckless feeling that prompted it: I quietly put my hand out, opened the door, and gathering my long riding-habit about me, threw myself from the carriage. Of course, I fell prostrate, but quite unhurt, excepting a graze on the hand ; and, jumping up, exclaimed, as I brushed the dust from my face, ‘Well, I suppose I am to love the soil, after all ; for I have kissed it in spite of myself!’ And did I not love it? —do I not love it? The Lord knoweth. He who marked my first entrance there by two such awful deliverances, can alone say how deep, how fervent, how all-pervading is the love of Ireland, dear Ireland, in every vein of my heart.

The chaise had been stopped immediately after my desperate leap ; and I returned to it, more amused by the excessive terror that I had occasioned to my companions than impressed by the manifest interposition of divine power in preserving me. I need not pur-

sue the journey, nor relate the deep waters of affliction through which I proudly and unflinchingly held my way, filled, even from the first, with love for the people whom I had so shamefully prejudged, but not reconciled to Him whom I professed to serve and adore, until He visited me with strange and agonizing convictions of my lost and sinful state, which I divulged to no human being; and then, by the power of the Holy Spirit, through His own precious word alone, apart from all other instrumentality, showed me the atoning Lamb, filled me with joy and peace in believing, and after months of sweet and blissful communion with him, brought me among His dear children—even those who are now suffering persecution and affliction for His sake and the gospel.

Among by-gone days, that is indeed with me a memorable one which welcomed me to the green sod of Ireland. The impatient stamp with which I delighted, as it were, to tread her underfoot, when landing on the northern point of her magnificent bay, contrasted with the heart-broken reluctance that lingered to pick up a pebble from the last jutting little promontory of sand, when re-embarking from its southern side after several years sojourn—is vivid in my recollection. Deep sorrow was my portion at either period; but, with outward circumstances nearly similar, oh how changed its aspect! I had come thither under the impression that human suffering was a suitable atonement for human sin; and while conscience bore me witness that I had, from the earliest dawn of reason, frequently transgressed the

known commands of God, I found in the pressure of early and severe affliction not only what I considered a sufficient punishment for those transgressions, but enough even to turn the balance in my favour, and to render me a claimant on the justice of the Most High ! Because in the particular trial of my life I had not perhaps merited at the hand of man what I was called to endure, I stood boldly forth as a specimen of injured innocence, often appealing to the Searcher of hearts in the language that even David could not have used, except in a typical character, and prophetic strain. I gathered into one view the sorrows of past years, and many a comfortless anticipation of the future, clouding over with their needless gloom every little interval of sunshine and repose that was graciously permitted for the refreshment of a weary spirit. But this picture is too vile to dwell upon : what was the other ? A lengthened catalogue of sorrows endured : a dark prospect of threatened woes ; a rending asunder of the sweetest ties that Christian friendship ever formed and sanctified—an exile from the country that I had learned to love, as a Beth-el of spiritual enjoyment, and a return to that which had never afforded me a privilege worth having, apart from the endearments of a home no longer mine. Yet, amid many sinful repinings and unbelieving fears, there was a peace, nay a joy, passing expression. In all these things I saw the natural consequences of inbred corruption and actual sin, to which I had learned to trace every blot upon this fair creation ; and in such consequences, I saw the heinousness of that

sin, and its eternal wages at the hand of a pure and holy God. I beheld the mighty ransom which had delivered me from going down into the pit; I confessed the hand that had led me so far; and while through a mist of tears I looked northward across the beautiful bay, remembering my first arrival, with all its consequences, my soul responded to the language of dear John Newton—

Determin'd to save, he watched o'er my path,
When, Satan's blind slave, I sported with wrath,
And would he have taught me to trust in His name,
And thus far have brought me, to put me to shame?

No: the scenes themselves hardly presented such a contrast as the feelings that prevailed. Night, a troubled sea, a dark deep gulf of sullen waters intervening between my ship and the perpendicular side of the pier, with none about me but the casual acquaintances of a day, who knew no more of me and mine than I did of them, and a country that was to me far worse than indifferent—this was my arrival. My departure was on a brilliant summer morning; my path along the shining sand, that seemed gradually to melt and mingle in the blue rippling waters, playing beneath the sunbeam, and bearing on their bosom the light boat prepared to convey us to the steamer, which was moored in the bay. Around were some whose eyes, like mine, overflowed with natural sorrow, while their hearts glowed with the delicious anticipation of eternal re-union in a better land. Not a feeling of

my soul but what was understood and reciprocated ; and the tie formed below *could not* be broken ; for a crucified Redeemer formed the connecting link. One who even then was preparing to bid a long farewell to his own sweet isle, on a mission of love to the souls of distant heathen, led my reluctant step into the boat : and at the moment of seating me there, he repeated, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." Yes, I think I was then humbled under the overpowering conviction that such a vile, guilty, proud, thankless, rebellious atom as I, when embarking on that broad and beauteous water, was and had been from eternity the object of a love which, manifested in due time, had assured me that, whatsoever might be my coming trials, in all—all—I should be more than conqueror through Him who had so loved me. Oh, the depth of the riches of that redeeming love !

But I was sorrowful still ; and sorrow in one shape or another, yea, sorrow upon sorrow, is blended with every tie that binds me to Ireland. I would not have it otherwise ; I would not forget that this is the day of her calamity, and that to weep over her now is the best token of being one day permitted to rejoice and joy with her. Now, while her faithful witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, and her believing children, who work the works of God in faith and prayer, are discouraged and put to shame ; while violence and fraud are connived at, and an idolatrous apostacy cherished, and the wicked walk on every side, and the vilest of

men are exalted—it is well that my reminiscences of Ireland should partake in the sombre hue of her destiny—that the dearest spot in her wide boundary should be a grave, and the saddest of my thoughts still wander thitherward.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE OAK-STUMP.

SOMETHING of recent occurrence has recalled to my mind a circumstance, which, at the time, amused me greatly, and furnished not a few subsequent reflections. I can and do vouch for the truth of the incident; it really happened: but to render it less incredible than it might appear to an English reader, I must observe that in sundry districts of Ireland they do not always carry the finish of a kitchen so far as we do, in country houses of even high respectability, and of the most substantial description. That part of the fitting most frequently dispensed with is the floor. Boards or bricks are little known, in some places; and where a few flags are laid down, so many portions become detached in process of time, or sink unequally into the soil, that the pavement is but a partial, irregular affair. I do not mean this as a general description: but I have often seen it so, in houses of large dimensions, and possessing luxurious accommodations; while, either from a stretch of hospitality on the part of the servants, or as a security

against nightly depredation, the fowls were admitted snugly to roost among the rafters, or other conveniences, beneath the warm and sheltering roof. This sketch may furnish a hint to unravel the mystery which, had it occurred in a well-bricked or dry-boarded apartment, would have been altogether too marvellous for the grasp of any rational credulity.

It was in the very spacious kitchen of a fine old family mansion, embowered in venerable oaks and elms of mighty growth, that the servants, requiring a stout block for culinary purposes, had obtained it from the lower part of a stately tree, recently felled; and fixing its spreading base on the kitchen floor,—so they called it, though of flooring that quarter was perfectly destitute—they used it for several years, in the capacity aforesaid. Many a hard blow had the block sustained; many a time had its stubborn surface turned the edge of a hatchet and saw, sending the grumbling operator to the grindstone. Nobody doubted but the block was destined to serve for some generations among those to whom its uses were various and important. The kitchen range did not appear more completely naturalized in its appointed station; nor, apparently, was the iron which composed it more effectually divorced from its parent mine, than was its neighbour, the heart of oak, from its brethren of the forest.

One fine moist spring, however, produced a singular effect on the block: several delicate young leaves were seen to sprout from its side. It was remarked as a curious circumstance by some of the servants,

but the leaves soon being chipped off little notice was taken. The following year it exhibited more conspicuous tokens of vegetation : the shoots were many and of vigorous growth ; while the servants agreed to preserve them, pleased to behold their ancient friend in so respectable a livery of national green. Towards autumn, its appearance became so striking that the report was carried into the parlour ; and the master of the family found on inspection so fine a development of root, striking deep into the soil of the kitchen, that for the sake of experiment he caused it to be very carefully dug up, without stripping those young roots, and placed in the natural ground, near an ancient avenue of its own kindred. He was not disappointed : for in a year or two the bushy honours of this kitchen block furnished one of the finest specimens of oak foliage to be found on the demesne.

I was in the neighbourhood at the time of this singular transplantation, and ridiculed very freely the idea of any other result than the speedy withering both of root and sprout : alleging that the atmospheric change from a culinary hothouse to the chill damps of closing autumn, with winter's succeeding blight, would alone suffice to extinguish the feeble essay of vegetation. But I wronged the noble plant : or rather the hardihood with which the Creator has endowed that majestic race of trees. It shamed my confident predictions, and became an ornament to the place.

Such a type has afforded me many pleasing illustrations, both on national and personal subjects ; but one case is at this moment present to me, which follows it

out, I think, with peculiar truth. It regards the solitary survivor of a family that once flourished in the courts of the Lord : until, one by one, they were removed to a better country, and this youth remained, cut off from every external tie that had formerly united him to the people of God. Thrown among worldlings, he became altogether as they : he served their master, and he served them, in all the drudgery of sin. The world, the busy, noisy, abject world, became his element : in their daily toil he partook, and from their scenes of nightly revelry he was never absent. No more resemblance could be traced between H. and his departed relatives, than between the low and greasy block in a butcher's stall and the noble stem that throws the canopy of its verdant branches over a wide expanse of sheltered sod. The most sanguine of Christ's followers dared not to surmise of poor young H. that a principle of spiritual life existed within, lying dormant thus from year to year.

Yet so it was : I had the story from himself, that the first motions of that divine vegetation arose in his soul without the intervention of any other means than a vague and confused recollection of what he had heard in very early life. It was in the midst of as busy and bustling a throng as ever had congregated around him that these thoughts stole over his mind, gradually absorbing it to such an extent, that the forms which flitted past him were but as the shadows of clouds, and their merry or earnest voices as the murmur of running streams to the contemplative recluse. Hours had thus elapsed, ere he became sensible of

their flight; and he hastened into retirement with feelings incomprehensible to himself, there to brood over the sweet and awful theme.

His experience was even from this moment a remarkably happy one: convictions he had, deep and powerful, of indwelling and of actual sin: but the manifestation of redeeming love was too vivid for the long continuance of any cloud. Fruits soon appeared, extraordinary enough in the sight of his ignorant companions, but passed over by them as the effect of momentary caprice. After a while, however, the Lord, who was thus mightily working in and for him, directed his removal, even in point of professional avocations, from among the ungodly, and placed him in the midst of those who knew and feared His name. Until then, H. had made no open profession, and it was a matter of painful conjecture with his new associates, and of profane jests and foolish bets with the old, as to how he would appear in this situation. A very little time sufficed to delight the one party as much as the others were astonished and chagrined. If ever a young man boldly professed the name of Christ, and beautifully adorned his doctrine, such a man was H. Rooted and grounded in the faith, he stood, a tree of the Lord's planting, bearing fruit abundantly, that He might be glorified. I may speak freely of the departed, and H. is gone to his rest: I never beheld more vigorous growth than in him; or a richer adorning of those gifts and graces which the Lord alone can bestow.

Unquestionably there is a blessing connected with

the steady observance of family religion, far greater and more extensive than our unbelief is willing to admit. I could fill a volume with the brief enumeration of instances coming within my own knowledge ; and I do verily think that the Lord conceals from us many a work of grace in the souls of our dearest connexions, because of our slowness of heart to believe the immutability of His exceeding great and precious promises. It is very generally allowed that the miracles of healing performed on diseased bodies by the blessed Jesus were typical of what He is ever waiting to do for our sin-sick souls. We often find the leper, the blind Bartimeus, and the Syro-phenician woman, brought forward with striking commentaries, as furnishing invaluable encouragement to come, and be saved : but I think we are not equally willing to lay hold on the case of the man whose friends let him down through the roof—of the centurion so successfully pleading on behalf of his sick servant, and of the father who brought his poor possessed child to the Saviour immediately after His transfiguration. All these are told with such emphasis of application—why do we so overlook them ? The last-named instance is peculiarly forcible : does not conscience tell us that we are very much in the habit of bringing our unconverted friends before the Lord with an “ If thou canst ? ” It is not that we doubt his power abstractedly : but I, for one, often detect myself in meddling in matters too high for me, by putting forward at such times, the secret decrees of electing sovereignty ; so that by musing whether such a soul be of the number of the

elect, I have virtually put that treacherous "If thou canst" between me and my prayer. God, says this specious sort of unbelief, may have so bound himself by his own eternal decree, that this soul does not come within the number who shall be saved. Away with such daring perversions of a glorious truth! And oh, that we heeded more the impressive, the invaluable, the heart-strengthening reproof—"If *thou* canst *believe*:—all things are possible to him that believeth." And where, all the while was the subject of this momentous dialogue? Why, he "wallowed foaming:" in the very grasp, under the fiercest dominion of the devil.

'But this was a child.' Be it so: *he* was no child to whom, when his friends brought him, and let him down in the midst before Jesus, the Saviour "seeing *their* faith, said unto him, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." Of course, no thinking Christian will suppose that I am verging to the popish doctrine of saintly mediation, based on the merits of the mediating saints, but this is the simple fact—God works by means; and your earnest believing prayers for your friend are as much an appointed means as any that you can name. In using those means, according to that appointment, O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt? "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst," cries the leper, and the answer is sweetly given for every leprous soul that shall, to the end of time, come to the Healer—"I will." "If thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us and help us," says the doubting father, interceding for his child: and in

like manner comes the meet reply for every hesitating intercessor, "If thou canst believe : all things are possible to him that believeth." I may well be pardoned the repetition : we require to have these words hammered into us, until they extort the bitter, self-convicted cry, "Help thou mine unbelief!"

Doubting Christians ! there is many a soul in glory, brought to its threshold through the appointed means of your secret supplications, concerning which you are now in heaviness, because this word of the Lord not being mixed with faith in you He could not do his mighty work openly. It is done, nevertheless ; and if you would struggle for a little more belief, you would perchance see more, even now, of the glory of God, in reference to your buried brother. I am no theorist in this matter : I write what I do know.

The old oak-stump furnishes one of these trivial incidents of by-gone days on which faith can lay hold, and appropriate it. I sometimes see individuals placed in situations as unpromising as the dry block in the kitchen, or H. in a riotous party, concerning whom I am encouraged to ask, May not these, like Aaron's rod, be ordained to blossom and bud, and to be laid up in the heavenly sanctuary for a testimony ? Then I am induced to pray accordingly ; and perhaps I see the individual no more in this world, nor ever hear of him again : but such wayside prayers are not always lost. If we rightly considered who prompts every real supplication that ascends from the believer's heart, we should fear to question the issue : but there

is evidently among us a great dread of believing too much, even of the love and faithfulness of our covenant God. Does this meet the eye of a wife whose soul is in heaviness because the beloved of her heart is paralytic—destitute of spiritual power? Of a mother weeping over her son, possessed of a devil,—internally deaf and dumb? Of a sister, who lies lamenting at Jesus' feet, because her dear brother is still sleeping in death, and bound in his grave clothes? Of a daughter, whose father is sick in the world's fever, and cannot wake from the region of its delirious dreams? Oh that I could shew you Him who, ever living to make intercession, waits but till you vigorously lay hold on His own true word—"all things are possible to him that believeth"—to give you exceedingly abundantly above all that you ask or think. Paul was refused, when he petitioned to have the thorn in his own flesh removed; but in which of his glowing intercession for others do we trace the shadow of our own ifs and buts? It is most true that we are not of ourselves sufficient to think, or to ask any thing as of ourselves: but the very fact of being drawn out to pray for those dear to us, is a token that a mightier power is working within; and we ought not to restrain it, or to check the filial petition with ignorant surmises as to what *may* be the will of God. "Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee!" cried Abraham, when the full tide of divine promise was flowing towards Isaac. "And as for Ishmael I have heard thee," was the gracious reply. God has more blessings to bestow than

we can muster claims to put in. Let us not impute niggardliness to Him who when He ascended up on high, leading captivity captive, received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

CHAPTER XXIV

WILLIAM III.

By how trivial an event is the strong current of thought sometimes turned out of the smooth channel wherein it is peacefully flowing, into some other, through which it is compelled to hurry on, like a foaming torrent dashing its troubled waters against rock and stone, or murmuring through shades of darkness and dismay! This is my present case: I was preparing to think on paper, and think I cannot, just now, on any other topic than the one brought before me. A dear little lad, who well knows the habitual bent of my feelings, came to me in breathless haste, to exhibit a prize that he had secured while making some purchase at a toy-shop—it was a farthing, displaying in high preservation the effigies of William and Mary; and on the reverse, the Irish harp: bearing date 1693. And this, thought I, as I gazed on the simple relic, this is the 13th of April, 1836—the seventh anniversary of that day when a king of the house of Hanover put his royal hand to the act of undoing what this humble coin commemorates! A day,

indeed this is, to be remembered, but not with joy : an event that showed the most undaunted warrior of the age yielding to intimidation, the most consummate statesman of his time egregiously outwitted, and a Protestant king, with reluctant anguish of spirit, renouncing the very principles that placed his family on the British throne. Days that are past ! what retrospect can I take, that will not fill me with shame and confusion of face on behalf of my besotted country—made drunk, indeed, as it was, with the wine of the wrath of that cup which the great harlot fills for the destruction of all who approach her !

I will not dwell upon the period itself, when with prayers and tears and fastings, I besought the Lord, night and day, to avert from my loved country the guilt of this alliance with his anti-christian foe. Conscience bears me witness, that in every possible way before God and man I recorded the solemn PROTEST which, though weighing but as a grain of sand in the mountainous bulk of divided opinions, was yet both a secret sigh and an open cry against the abomination that was done.* I will not recount my thoughts and feelings, when, on St. George's festival following, the name-day, of the reigning king, the day when the fatal new law first came actively into operation, I found myself right opposite the royal standard of England, displayed in honour of the Sovereign, on the rampart of a great national military establishment, its gorgeous silken folds hanging listlessly down the

* See Ezekiel ix.

flag-staff; and poor Erin's pictured harp actually resting on the ground. I stood and wept in the bitterness of national feeling; until a sudden breeze arose, unfolding what was *once*

Our glorious *semper eadem*, the banner of our pride.

and as the magnificent breadth of that banner was flung to the playful winds, I turned away with one word only bursting from my lips—'Ichabod—Ichabod!'

But the effigies of William and Mary have sent me further back, to the days of my sojourn in the great battle-field of Protestantism, Ireland. In the metropolis of that country there is one spot of rare, and, in the estimation of many, unparalleled architectural beauty. It is that where the spectator stands facing Carlisle Bridge, the Dublin University on his right hand; a little in advance to the left, that splendid structure over the Senate-house, now the National Bank of Ireland, with its two fronts, the one looking on College-Green, the other on Westmoreland Street, while the gracefully rounded sweep, destitute of any sharp angle, rather unites than divides those spacious openings. Onward across the bridge, towers the monumental pillar of Nelson, surmounted by his statue, which marks the centre of Sackville Street, a noble continuation of that of Westmoreland. This line of buildings is one of the most simply grand, in width and uniformity of any in Europe. It terminates in the great Rotunda, behind which arise the trees of Rutland-Square.

To the spectator yet standing before the dark walls

of the University, the prospect described lies straight forward : but if he turn his eyes to the left he beholds a very handsome, open space, known as College Green, though paved and flagged according to the general style of the city ; the bank forming one side of it, and dwelling houses bounding the other. Here, midway between and nearly equi-distant from him, the citizens of Dublin placed, in the year 1701, a splendid equestrian statue of their royal deliverer, William of Orange. The figure, colossal in size, and executed with great beauty and spirit, has stood for nearly a century and a half, universally allowed to be the ornament of the city : while from year to year the inhabitants have been accustomed to form in procession, marching around it with music and banners, in commemoration of the happy event achieved by William's instrumentality ; Roman Catholics cheerfully uniting with their Protestant neighbours, until the wily movers of slumbering disaffection interposed to dissuade them from concurring in the celebration of what they are pleased to term the triumph of heresy.

Among the visions of by-gone days, how vivid were those that would crowd on my view, when slowly pacing that remarkable spot, I have glanced from the light and exquisitely-finished building that once contained the stormy parliament, to the sombre and plain, yet stately edifice of Trinity College—famous in Irish annals for the stern intrepidity wherewith its inmates withstood alike the fraudulent devices and despotic decrees of James and his unprincipled minion Tyrconnel. The archives of that college contain

a noble testimony to their fidelity, resisting the royal mandate for the admission of Green, and defending their Protestantism even to the point of forcible ejection by the soldiers of their treacherous prince : who seized their property, plundered their college, converted their chapel into a magazine, and their chambers into prisons.

Again, I have looked toward the Lifley, crowded with shipping up to Carlisle Bridge ; and have fancied the scene of anguish, when, terrified at the departure of Lord Clarendon, and the growing power of Tyrconnel no less than fifteen hundred families of Dublin Protestants, forsaking their homes and property, embarked together at that port ; accompanying the displaced governor, who had resigned the sword of state, no longer available in his hand, into that of Tyrconnel. Dark and fearful was the succession of events which deluged Ireland in the blood of her people, rendering her green surface one wide stage for the direful tragedies of civil war, during the reign of Popish violence : until, in the fixed resolution of terminating the unnatural struggle, our Protestant William landed on her shores, and wrought, under God, the deliverance of his people. I could not but turn, with deep emotion, to the speaking memento of that people's gratitude, raised on the spot by hands that had long hung down in despondency, had drooped in exile, and been wrung in hopeless sorrow for the many-loved ones sacrificed in vain. The statue told me of a joyous scene : of returning fugitives, re-united households, and the balm of reviving charity dropping

into wounds that rankled with bigotted hate. To that event I traced the gradual dawning of hope on the benighted population: by it the word of God was preserved in the land, and the temples of a pure worship hedged round with security, reserved for the kindling of holy fire upon their altars when light should indeed arise upon the church, and the glory of the Lord be seen upon her.

That memorial is gone; the hand of ruffian violence, guided by the principle of implacable hatred against Protestantism, has perpetrated a deed at which civilization may blush. By cowardice and treachery, under cover of night, the beautiful monument has been destroyed. An act it is worthy to be chronicled together with that of the redoubtable lord mayor of Dublin, who in 1688 committed the officers of Christ-church to prison, because, as he alleged, "their bells did not ring merrily enough," on the supposed birth of a legitimate successor to the popish king! Equally puerile, equally malicious, and equally futile is this act of vengeance upon an innocent statue. Endeared as was the equestrian prince, his horse was, happily not the palladium of our safety. No armed hosts lay concealed within it,—no magic spell connected its fate with that of Protestantism—nor can its overthrow affect in the slightest degree, the stability of that hope wherein we do rejoice—yea, and will rejoice. It pleased the Lord to establish liberty and comparative peace, by means of human enterprise: but does he confine himself to the use of such means? far from it. When the vital principle is

deeply fixed within, we need but a constant supply of faith, that, as seeing Him who is invisible, we may rest on his covenant grace, and fear nothing. It is well that, when the main building is complete, the scaffolding should be removed; and however deep the sin of enacting anti-protestant laws, yet blessed be God! Protestantism consists not in acts of parliament. However flagrant the recent outrage on national feeling and public property, Protestantism hangs not on visible signs, nor draws support from aught that man can give. I turn to the records of by-gone days, and take courage. The Lord's eye is on his people, and his hand outstretched to interpose, just at the point where he alone can succour. The wrath of his enemies shall praise him: their violence shall be overruled to the deliverance of many souls from a bondage, the character of which is made so glaringly plain by these deeds of malice. Taught, by sad experience, to "cease from man," the people who know his name shall wax stronger in his strength, and do exploits, not for the promotion of their own temporal interest, but for the extension of his Gospel.

The coincidence between passing events and those which Leland and other historians have recorded of the former tribulation is so striking, that I am led to regard the late outrage as being overruled for special encouragement to the Protestants of Ireland now, by guiding their thoughts back to the former struggle. I read of a persecution against the clergy, which, by withholding tithe, reduced them to extreme distress: of a transfer of judicial and municipal authority into

the hands of the lowest and most bigotted among the Roman Catholic population ; of a confederation among the highest powers, directed by a *crafty lawyer*, one Nagle, who, for the promotion of his own selfish schemes, involved his poor country in almost utter destruction. I read of an attempt to force on a learned society a most obnoxious character, prepared to work, by every crafty device, the will of his master ; and that their firm and honest rejection of this unfit associate was revenged by the withdrawal of a government grant ! At every step of the history I am met by such coincidences, that, remembering the years of the right hand of the Most High, and His work in former times, despondency gives place to glowing hope, rendered still brighter by the sweet conviction that the present trial finds our Protestant brethren far better armed with spiritual weapons than their fathers were, who trusted too much in the arm of flesh, and hasted to battle rather than to prayer. The poor little coin, henceforth to be cherished as a special prize, was struck to supercede the worthless currency of king James's pewter and brass : it has passed, no doubt, through hands that were raised in joyous thanksgiving ; and I will preserve it, fearless of gunpowder plots, a token of what shall yet be done when the Lord ariseth to plead his people's cause, and to vindicate the glory of his insulted name.

[This was written immediately after the overthrow of William's statue ; and before it was found that no injury of any consequence had been sustained by the colossal rider, who again bestrides his steed and forms as noble an object as ever.]

CHAPTER XXV.

THE ECLIPSE.

‘OWING to the extreme darkness expected during the eclipse, there will be no afternoon service to-day,’ said the parish clerk, at the close of the morning prayers on Sunday the 15th of May, 1836. Deep and rather strange was the emotion excited by this simple announcement, as the words of our Lord passed rapidly through the mind, “If the light within thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!” And far removed from idle curiosity were the feelings with which I sallied forth, ere the shadow had well touched the verge of the sun’s disc, to pass in a retired field the season of his obscuration.

The day was brilliant, and even oppressively warm. It breathed a fragrance and a balm that spoke of sunnier climes, and filled me with solemn thoughts of that miraculous eclipse which darkened Judea, when the orb averted his shining face from the awful spectacle of his Creator’s agony. A keen conviction of my own exceeding sinfulness—of the part which my iniquities bore, in humbling my Saviour even to the

death upon the cross, with somewhat of that appropriation which can say He “loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*,” combined at once to sadden and to elevate, during a short progress to the chosen spot. It was gained, and in its verdant retirement I watched, not so much the sun as the earth, for, I confess, the spectacle so interesting to an astronomer’s eye, attracted me less than the peculiar beauty of that dimness which even at its height left me a consciousness that, in spite of the eclipse, the sun was shining still—brilliantly shining—and retaining to himself a wide field of dazzling light upon the sky, though a cold dark blue in other quarters bore witness that a vast portion of his rays was withdrawn.

Insensibly, a vision of by-gone days arose before me : I could not fix the date, but at some period of happy childhood I had stood, in a fair garden, planted on a gentle slope ; at the bottom there ran a clear stream fringed with osier, willow, and hazle, which circled a common, until it reached the works of a mill, the object of my profound admiration, curiosity, and awe. The scene was restored, as by a magic touch ; and I stood on the highest point of the garden ground, with my blooming little brother beside me, peering through pieces of smoked glass at the opaque object then darkening our summer day ; and turning to admire, or rather to laugh at, the geese who, in solemn state, were waddling across the common towards their place of nightly repose. I recalled the innocent prattle of my sweet companion, his bright countenance, lighted up by sunshine from within, and his anxious

care, lest by any means I should lose any portion of the wonderful sight. 'I think my glass is better than yours: take it, dear,' was his occasional remark; and I dwelt upon his image, secretly exclaiming, Oh, where shall I now look for such sympathy, such love on this cold, dark, selfish earth! Dark indeed the earth was then waxing, in full unison with my feelings; and even the chill that accompanied the deepening gloom was congenial to that upon my spirits. The birds, flying low, in the direction of some sheltering trees and bushes, gave witness to their perception of the more than cloudy shadows that fell around, and, strange to say, I turned scarcely a glance towards the object of attraction, at that moment irresistible to many millions of eager gazers, but almost revelled in the gloom below.

From the by-gone days of individual feeling, a transition was soon made to what seems invoven in my very existence—the by-gone season of my country's prosperity. This rousing theme withdrew me from the former retrospect, inducing a train of thought wherein many a one would freely participate who could not enter into the more selfish regrets. More than once has the sun of England's splendor suffered an eclipse, and the light that was within her been turned to the blackness of night; and blind indeed must they be who descry not the ominous speck, stealing as of old with noiseless but rapid progress over the glowing disc, prepared to quench its brilliancy, and to scatter around the darkness of the shadow of death. Only two days had elapsed since I learnt such facts, from

indubitable authority, proclaimed too in the ears of many hundreds, as were calculated to fill with dismay every bosom not lulled into the torpor of self-deluding indifference. Among the encroachments lately made by the darkening powers of papal obscuratation, I found upon the lowest calculation, which they themselves aver to be far below the real number, five hundred and ten chapels, erected for, and dedicated to the idolatrous worship of Rome; with two other chapels, lately in the occupation of Protestants, purchased from these degenerate successors of the Reformers, and converted into mass-houses too! Nine colleges for the regular instruction of our British youth in Maynooth morality, and the theology of Dens. Seven hundred ecclesiastics, all sworn and girded to the work of warring against our national faith—A monastery in preparation, to harbour a hundred and forty monks of the dark and bigotted order of La Trappe; and, to spread the pollution yet wider and deeper, several infant schools, where the babes of England are taught to lisp the praises of the queen of heaven, and to bend the flexile knee, to lift the passive hand before a crucifix of wood—or a deity formed of potter's clay! I learnt that ample success had already crowned the proselyting zeal of these ministers of evil: that, through every gradation of rank, their false gospel had successfully run, winning souls from Christ, and filling their coffers with unholy gain. I was told how they creep subtly in, obtaining the kingdom by flatteries: submitting some fair-faced plan of a school, founded, to be sure, on rules of unobjectionable liber

ality, where the rudiments of useful knowledge are to be afforded to the poor, apart from all interference with their religious tenets. Such benevolent prospectuses are offered to the notice of wealthy Protestants, with a modest petition for a little pecuniary help to carry them into effect: and the money thus abstracted from the pockets of their hoodwinked dupes, goes to garnish the mass-house, to salary the singing men and singing women, and in every way to lengthen the cords and strengthen the stakes of their extending encampment in the land.

Their missionaries, emboldened by success, now leave their lurking-places, delivering public lectures against Protestantism. A number of Magazines are attractively got up, and supported by the whole literary energy of the crafty, well-taught priesthood, to further their views, by an extensive calculation among the upper and middle classes; while for the poor they are daily issuing a vast variety of cheap tracts, of most delusive tendency, and distributing them even at the doors of Protestant churches, to the departing congregation. Acute controversialists are employed as scripture readers, to visit freely among the poor, to terrify them with the thunders, and to allure them with the blandishments of the apostate church. By these, and other means—by all deceiveableness of unrighteousness directed by all the craft and subtlety of the devil and man—is the wolf repairing his ancient den in the very bosom of our privileged fold. And are there none awake to the danger? none found to reject the hireling's part, and to follow the steps of the

Good Shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep? There is one society, established, and hitherto conducted, on the pure principle of scriptural watchfulness, and scriptural resistance to the enemy. A society which, totally unconnected with any party, and carefully keeping aloof from all political questions, treads in the steps of our martyred forefathers. Has apostate Rome her clerical missionaries zealously at work? The Reformation Society is augmenting its body of evangelical clergymen, and sending them forth to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Has Popery her Magazines, full of all subtlety and mischief, and her tracts drugged deep with poison for the poor? The Reformation Society furnishes a faithful exposure of the enemy's devices, and to the extent of its funds sends out a little army of tracts, full of the gospel antidote. Scripture readers too have gone forth in Ireland, selected, commissioned, salaried by this society, who are there reaping a harvest of souls, from among the deluded people; and they lack but the power, not the will, to extend these efforts in England also. Yes, it is one grievous feature of the growing darkness, that a society which ought to enjoy the fervent prayers, the strenuous support of every true-hearted English Protestant, is suffered to struggle on, through difficulties of every shape, burdened with an old debt of thirteen hundred pounds, while as many thousands would be forth-coming from Protestant liberals, rather than the Popish priest, their polite neighbour, should want a spacious chapel, and a flourishing school. I cannot look upon the smiling

heart's-ease, now putting forth its lovely petals on every side, to tell me of D., the honoured subject of many a fond regret, without remembering how, from the day of this society's formation to that of his death he laboured in it, and for it. A warmer advocate, a more strenuous supporter of its claims on spiritual men, The Reformation Society never had, than in D. Well do I remember his intense anxiety, at a period when no common difficulties involved it. In his own energetic style he remarked to me, 'Its characteristic is honesty, based on godly principle. There is a cloud over it now, and the powers of hell are working for its overthrow: but never fear, dear friend; its banner is truth, and truth—God's truth—must and will prevail.' I have known him speak even of its pecuniary embarrassments, as overruled to try for a time its faith and constancy; 'and then,' he smilingly added, 'we shall be made to know whose is the silver, and whose the gold.' Well might such recollections of D. mingle with the sad and solemn thoughts of a day, the very anniversary of that, on which I, with several of his fellow-labourers in the work, beheld his remains committed to the grave—well may they deepen my regrets, that hitherto his beloved Society has been lying, a perfect and powerful engine, waiting but the means to feed her furnace, and to career away on a long wide track of missionary usefulness, in the defensive warfare that we must ere long be aroused to maintain.

Our repositories of ancient Protestant literature furnish weapons of proof, the republication of which

would go far towards turning the battle ; but without assistance this cannot be done. An institution is also much wanted in London, for the instruction of different classes of persons—a sort of depot, where young soldiers should be trained for the controversial encounter to which our clergy and laity are now frequently challenged by the well-disciplined forces of Rome. Can I behold, with augury of cheer, the rapid shading of our greatest light, and England lying in dreamy stillness, content that her eagles should droop the wing, and bow the head in dismay, while the owls and bats come screeching forth to seek their destined prey in the gloom of such unnatural twilight ? Yes, I can dare to hope ; for eclipsed as our sun has frequently been, it has never been quenched. He who set it to rule the day, sustains it yet ; and still from the darkest depth of shade he will bid it come forth, as a bridegroom from his chamber—rejoicing as a strong man, to run its appointed race. Even so, vital Protestantism, however sharp the conflict may be, will triumph over all ; for what saith the Lord ?—“The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” The candle that was lighted, by God’s grace, at the flames of our martyrs, has never since been put out in England—it never will be.

While my thoughts were thus engaged, the eclipsing body began to pass away ; the gladsome beam returned in its strength, diffusing light and heat, and joyousness around. The birds sprang forth from their covert, the shadows departed from the distant hills, and even the daisies at my feet looked up in gayer

guise, to welcome the returning ray. Yet it was sad to think that on his own Sabbath the temples of our God had been closed, and one allotted season of public worship had passed unnoticed by. Too touchingly applicable was this part of the type:—men had forsaken the house of prayer to give their undivided attention to a speck of darkness, a blot on the page of creation, an interloper between themselves and the fount of day.

Commentators tell us that the moon, in prophetic symbols, typifies the church; and here we must needs concede the title to her of Rome. A church, not reflecting in pure and silver light the glories of the sun of Righteousness to illumine a benighted world, but thrusting her black and scowling aspect between that world and its redeeming God—intercepting the day-spring from on high in its mission of mercy to sinful man, and causing many steps to stumble, which that beam would have guided into the way of peace. A church whose prerogative it is, to shut up the temples of a pure worship, and attract all eyes to gaze on her own dark visage, when they should be searching the pages of inspired truth. Alas for our country, should such an eclipse be at hand; for however short, it is most terrible—fearfully dishonouring to God, and ruinous to the souls that he hath made. Many a record of by-gone days exists, though now too little heeded, from which we may gather the effects of that ancient visitation, turning the sun into darkness, and the moon into blood:—veiling the light of truth, by withdrawing holy scripture from men's eyes, and defiling the

land with carnage—staining the church of Christ with the blood of his saints. The appeal made on this thrilling subject, at the recent meeting of the British Reformation Society, sank deep into the ears of some; may it have found entrance into their hearts, thence to be echoed through the corners of our land, and awaken a response worthy of those who, basking as they do in the gospel beam, can appreciate its grace and beauty; and resolve in the strength of the Lord, that His glory shall still dwell among us.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE CADET.

LOVELY as is the family of flowers, there are times when their more stately brethren of the forest advance an irresistible claim to preference. The burning rays of a sultry noon, reflected, as it were, from the highly-tinted petals of blushing roses, golden lilies, and the countless varieties which emulate their glowing hues, are almost insupportable, unless some friendly shadow be cast from those patrons of the vegetable world. But who, at such oppressive season, can resist the charms of that wide-spreading foliage which is the pride of our English scenery? The flattest prospect is animated by it: the most dull, tame outlay of ploughed fields derives life and beauty from its intersecting hedge-rows, if here and there a well-grown tree start up to break the level of their verdant lines. But when the towering monarch of the wood throws high and wide his bold arms, preserving around him a circlet of cool fresh green, where all beyond is parched; or when, from the ridges of hilly ground, dark files of these veteran guardians look down on some

peaceful village, the antique little cottages of which have been crumbling away, while they rejoiced in augmenting strength, girding in, with unmoved fidelity, race after race of the sons of men ; I think I could be content to pass the longest summer day unenlivened by the smile of a single flower, in meditating on the by-gone years, not merely of my own insignificant span, but of the generations that have appeared and vanished since those plants attained a growth entitling them to the name of trees.

Oh, how strongly do they plead against the thoughtless ingratitude of my people ! They seem to say, ‘Peace has been within our borders, plenteousness within our palaces. No feller has come up against us ; no ravaging hand has brought desolation within our rural reign. The Lord has been the defence of our country ; the Lord is our lawgiver and our king, He has saved us. Ascribe unto the Lord the honour due unto his name.’ Thus, lifting their graceful heads on high, they seem to say ; but feeble and cold is the response, if any be made to their appeal. Israel was commanded to preserve a special remembrance of her national deliverances—yea, the soul that neglected so to do, was to be cut off. Memorials were instituted, and pillars set up, that no Jew might look thereon without rendering thanks and praise for the wonderful works that his fathers had so declared unto him. Their not keeping these great works in remembrance was an especial charge against them ; and can we stand guiltless before God, when we behold the monuments that tell of centuries past,

through which we have experienced a succession of preservations, deliverances, privileges not to be paralleled in any other land, yet glorify not God in our hearts, neither are thankful!

I have been led into this train of thought while rejoicing in the cool shade of some venerable trees that encircle a burying-ground whither I had wandered in the evening of a most sultry day. The surrounding scenery was stamped with a character quite dissimilar from that of my distant village church-yard, as were its stately monuments from the lowly graves that swell beneath the antique yew. Nevertheless, the chord was struck; there is a levelling feature in death that may be masked over, but it cannot be obliterated. Croly has finely expressed it:

To join the great equality;—
 All alike are humble there.
 The mighty grave
 Wraps lord and slave.
 Nor pride nor poverty dares come
 Within that refuge-house, the tomb.

Accordingly the transition was easy from the imposing display around me to the undulating lines of that soft, modest sod, where I once purposed that the clay of my 'Happy Mute' should repose until the resurrection morning. And from thence to a more distant spot by me unvisited, where rest the mortal remains of one whose light step loved to accompany me to my favourite yew-tree, and whose active hands often secured some little branch, of fan-like elegance, to ornament my mantel-piece as long as the freshness of

its deep green should survive. He was one whom I had before caressed, as a little prattling child, in regions yet further removed ; and when I again saw him, after the lapse of some ten years, a well-grown youth attired in the showy uniform of his intended profession, the preparatory studies for which he, among many others, was pursuing, I could not detect a change in the character of his well-remembered face. The blue eyes laughed as innocently out, and the flaxen curls as carelessly played on his open brow ; while the dimple retained its individualizing stamp : never failing to deepen with undisguised pleasure at the sight of one whom he loved ‘with all the veins’ of his unsophisticated heart. Guileless he was indeed, and harmless in a degree very unusual among the fierce and forward spirits of that privileged corps—privileged in a sense more gratifying to the carnal heart than conducive to spiritual welfare.

But Robert was one not easily to be spoiled : the child of many prayers, I traced in his character the pledge that an answer of peace was being already sent to the secret supplications that daily ascended from the heart of a widowed mother, who sought for her boy better things than the world can give, and who, in placing him where I found him, acted not from choice. Although Robert made no open profession—a thing scarcely possible in his then situation—yet when I marked the genuine humility of his spirit, the docile, patient, loving temper that distinguished him, the meekness of wisdom wherewith he avoided any participation in the misdoings of others, and the respect

with which he evidently, though unconsciously, inspired, not only his giddy comrades, but the leading men of the institution, I could not but mentally exclaim, "Surely the grace of God is here!" I once asked a teacher, whose righteous soul was vexed from day to day by deeds that he could not prevent, what was his opinion of young Robert C. His reply was given with energetic brevity and feeling,—'He is a lamb.' Yet Robert, though it was pretty well understood that he would not fight, was never insulted: a passing joke he could take with admirable grace, and often by a sportive reply, turn the laugh against its originator: when an act of real aggression seemed in view, he calmly and gravely said, 'Gentlemen, this is a breach of discipline; and if you persist, I must report it.' By these means, as he himself told me, he led a quiet life, though not he owned, altogether a happy one: looking forward to entering on a profession from which his mind involuntarily shrunk—surely through the growing operation of that Spirit whose fruits of "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness," cannot desire to be fed by the blood of wretched men, butchered in unnatural warfare. He once asked me, 'How is it that I, a soldier's son, brought up in a garrison, and passing my whole time in military studies, should care so little for what all my comrades are mad about—a commission?' 'Dear Robert, I hope you will never be a soldier: and I think the Lord has some other path open for you.' 'Oh, don't encourage my dislike to it: *I must* be a soldier; and if ever you

tell my dear mother that my feelings are against it, I shall lock up all my thoughts from you.'

Yet the boy was courageous beyond many who gloried in their bravery. He one day brought me a pretty purse, formed of coloured ribbons, saying 'I netted this myself for you: will you take it?' I told him I wondered at his ingenuity, but much more how he could steal time and privacy to accomplish such a piece of work. 'Why,' said he opening his eyes very wide, 'I netted it in the guard-room.' 'And what did your comrades say? they must have bantered you terribly.' 'They tried to do so; but when I told them they would be glad of as kind a friend as you are to me, and that they only envied alike my privileges and my skill, they left off.' It was the remark of one who had served through many a hard campaign, and who delighted in Robert, that it required more courage to do this than to fight a dozen battles. Robert's purse is stored among the dearest of my relics.

I bless God, that while indulging the dear boy's wish to pass in quiet walks with me and my little party the hours that others devoted to very different pursuits, I did not neglect the one thing needful, but spoke often to him on the concerns of his soul. His grave, sweet looks gave encouragement, though I never could draw from him a word expressive of the effect produced: and his increasing fondness for society that would have become most irksome had the subject been unwelcome, gave a stronger testimony that his heart went beyond his lips. It was his delight

to ramble about the village church-yard with me ; and to hunt with Jack for shamrocks among the grass. He was not a whit less national than the dumb boy ; and the only flash of anger that I detected in him was one of passionate wrath, on hearing a reflection cast on his country by some prejudiced person. I calmed him, by taking up the subject in my own way : nor could I tell whether the tears that immediately swelled in his eye were those of indignation, or of gladness at hearing the calumniator of poor Ireland effectually silenced.

The yew-tree, with its venerable trunk dilapidated by the hand of time, and its vigorous shoots of new and glorious vegetation, stands before me now, so vividly drawn out, that I wonder at the perfect picture, after such a lapse of years. Just as distinct is the light figure of the young cadet, standing at full stretch, on tiptoe, perseveringly resolved to bring down, with the handle of a parasol, an elegant little tuft of newly-expanded foilage ; while Jack, with vehement gesticulation, tried to dissuade him from endangering ‘Mam’s pet umbrella,’ and to cut a hooked stick from the hedge. A simple group—but how touching, when I reflect, that while the aged tree stands unmoved and unchanged, the agile forms of those dear youths are mouldering in graves far far apart from me and from each other ; and their spirits together rejoicing before the throne of the Lamb, while I am left to weep over the recollection of the warm love that their young hearts bore me, and the pleasant smiles with which they gladdened many a sorrowful hour in the very darkest

season of my earthly pilgrimage. It was at that season when I was yet unconscious of the fearful blast that had fallen on my pleasant gourd, and withered it away,—it was then, that the mother and sisters of Robert overwhelmed me with such a debt of love and gratitude, as none may compute but He who is pledged to repay it a thousand fold into their own kind bosoms. It was a strange dispensation that, some years after, when all had been arranged to their heart's content for their Robert's settlement in a peaceful and useful walk of life, took him away with a stroke almost as sudden as the one that overwhelmed me; before even the rapid steps of love could reach his dying pillow. But all was well: his gentle spirit returned to the God who gave it, not without leaving a sweet record of simple living faith in the all-sufficient Saviour of sinners.

In dreams and visions of the night, I sometimes find myself beneath the aged yew-tree, holding converse with those who will no more gladden my sight until, in glorified bodies, they arise from the dust. I cannot but feel a beauty in the dispensation so grievous to flesh, so painful and humbling to man. If each lived out the full term of years allotted to mortality,—if the young and the strong were never cut off from among us, the aged only borne away, coming to the grave like shocks of corn fully ripe—we should lose a powerful and a precious link, ill spared, between our dust-loving souls and the regions of immortality. It is when some youthful companion is snatched from the endeared circle and wafted aloft beyond our ken,

that we learn to look, as it were, into the heights and depths of invisibility, and to realize what of all things we are least disposed to realize. I visit some well-known spot, where all is, perhaps, as it was ten or twenty years ago: my thoughts cannot but revert to the time, and to the individuals then surrounding me. Some of those—oh, how often the dearest and the brightest of all!—are gone, passed altogether away from sublunary scenes: but from my heart they cannot pass away: and knowing that they still exist, how can I but follow them, in tender thought, to their mysterious abode, rendered more than half a home to me by becoming the dwelling-place of those so dear. It is true that all reminiscences of the departed are not thus sweet. Over some an awful darkness hangs; for I know not that they were Christ's, and therefore I dare not follow their track beyond the confines of this material world. Yet, such is the merciful dispensation of divine grace, that I think the mind of the believer is generally, after a short and bitter struggle, enabled to acquiesce in so leaving them until the day of the revelation of all things. The heart that is savingly united to Jesus is enabled to divorce all that has finally rejected him, though not without a pang of lingering fondness, that would be insupportable if permitted long to abide. It, however, gives place to the vivid, the cherished feeling which clings to the memory of the blessed—the dead who have died in the Lord—the souls that have flown as the doves to their windows, and nestled in the bosom of redeeming love.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE LONELY WRECK.

THERE is one object in creation of such surpassing grandeur, so vast in magnitude, so terrific in power, so pre-eminently sublime in all its varying aspects, whether of the rudest tumult or the softest beauty, that, among an island people, I often wonder to find it so rarely made the subject of delighted eulogy. Probably, however, the impressions of such as have only looked upon it from the shore are very imperfect ; they cannot do justice to the glories of ocean like those who have bounded over its billows : while among the latter class a very large proportion have been so inconvenienced by the usual concomitants of a first voyage, as to retain any thing but a pleasant recollection of their trip. These considerations often withhold my hand when about to indulge in marine reminiscences : for very few of my readers have, perhaps, been equally privileged to go down into deep waters ; to see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the great deep, for long succeeding days and weeks, without even a momentary sensation that could deaden

the exquisite enjoyment known only to such. A privilege indeed it is, to ride among the stormy billows with spirits as light as the foam that flashes by: to pace the deck, with confident though wary tread, inclining to this side or that, as the mighty machine rolls like a cork on the tops of far mightier waves; and to feel every nerve new-braced, every pulse enlivened, every thought elevated, and all the faculties expanded, as it were, to take in a scene, which for the extent of its turbulent magnificence, has no peer, no rival among created things. I desire to be thankful, that, in times of sore trial, and when as yet the tempest-torn wanderer on the sea of life had found no anchor of the soul, nor opened faith's eye to behold a sheltering haven of safety and repose, so much of this enjoyment was vouchsafed to cheer a drooping heart. Often has that heart recognized the hand which filled it with food and gladness; often experienced the reality of the assurance, "I have girded thee, though thou hast not known me."

I am not now about to expatiate on what might appear the wild chimera of a roving imagination to the many—are they not too many?—who in quest of foreign novelties have passed over from their privileged isle to a neighbouring, unblest land, making voyages equally short and miserable, in a crowded steamer, with the accompaniment of a grating, rumbling, jarring engine, the monotonous, hurrying rush of paddle-wheels through the water, and a pennon of black smoke, defiling the atmosphere above, with an occasional descent of its murky particles on their

dress. How could they realize any description of the stately, noiseless measured sweep of a tall vessel over billows which, many a league removed from intercepting land, roll in unbroken magnitude through a fathomless abyss, with leisurely rise and graceful fall, and a melody too deep for man's squeaking contrivances to interrupt. What affinity can the bare uncouth chimney, with its sooty appendage displayed at right angles, claim with the tapering mast, the undulating sails, gradually lessening as they rise in snowy lustre to its summit, where the long streamer gracefully mingles its negligent folds to diversify them, while beyond the broad white wing of the spanker sail, out floats St. George's banner 'blent with the silver cross to Scotland dear;' and the heart will throb, while the eye, fearless of encountering smoke or steam, looks up and greets the flag that 'has braved a thousand years, the battle and the breeze.' Oh, it were an idle attempt to embody in a tame verbal description the swelling emotions peculiar to such a season.

But ocean recollections, though always interesting, are not always joyous to me; a scene there witnessed, albeit not necessarily accompanied with any very melancholy thoughts, often recurs to my mind, when under depression; exciting that mixture of feeling so beautifully expressed in the words "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing," taken, as they should ever be, in connection with our Lord's parting assurance, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

It was in mid-atlantic on a bright, mild morning, when the ship, her sails languidly flapping, made scarcely any way, that an object was descried, bearing so evidently the appearance of a wreck, that one or two of our boats put off to examine it more closely. The conjecture was verified; they found it to be a vessel, wrecked and totally deserted, but by bearing a freight of timber preserved in a buoyant state. The sailors called her 'water-logged.' She was boarded by them and several of our passengers, who, from the absence of boats, and the removal of what was most available of her spars and rigging, concluded that the crew had made a leisurely retreat, well provided for a long trip, and with a good prospect, as was judged from the fineness of the season, of subsisting until they could fall in with other vessels, or make the Bermudas port. Nothing was found of any value: the cabins had been stripped: and only the remains of some old log-books were left, much saturated, and consequently rendered almost illegible by the salt water. Our friends came back, with very little concern on their countenances, bringing the logs, which they spread in the sunshine to dry, anticipating some amusement from the perusal of what they could decypher: nor were they disappointed, for I frequently saw them laughing heartily over the entries, which, they said, the captain had always made when out of humour with his cook. I sought no share in their occupation, nor sympathized in their mirth, for rarely have I gazed with more pensive thought on any ob-

ject than I did, during the whole of a long morning, on the helpless wreck from which we slowly receded.

It was such a deserted thing! All belonging to her were gone. To have sunk beneath the billows and settled into one of ocean's deepest caves, would have been a more natural fate,—I almost longed to see her go down. But there she rode, in external appearance differing little from the well-manned ships that crossed her track, yet untenanted, unowned, and so emphatically alone! No chart to direct, no steersman to guide, no compass whereby to shape her course: no desired haven in view, nor any to take an interest in her fate beyond the quest of idle curiosity, or selfish avarice, such as her visitors of that day had manifested. And I thought how many bosoms had once palpitated with anxious cares for her, regarding her as the repository of their dearest hopes and fondest anticipations; how many prayers had accompanied her going out; how many wistful looks watched her expected coming in. Then, there were those at hand, the chiefest business of whose lives was to preserve her unharmed: no wind could roughen the main but it was met by some skilful manœuvre to turn it to her advantage, or, if that might not be, to shield her from its rage. Then, she was guided to shun the sunken rock, to breast the foaming wave, to catch the favouring breeze, and ever to point where all wishes were centered. Watchful eyes then awoke for her that she might pass securely over the dark waters when night was on her track: and woe to the hand that should point a hostile menace

against her ! for she was English ; and English were the hearts that owned her. But now—the wind freshened a little, and our captain gave the cheerful word, our sailors were all at the ropes, our helmsman turned the wheel, our pennon rose with undulating grace, and we proceeded on our way. I saw her tossing on the busy wave, and reeling under the sudden blast : and then I saw her no more, save as a dark lone speck upon the world of waters, which I was never to behold again.

I did not forget her ; though when the log-book had gone the round of curious and idle hands it was stowed away in our captain's locker, and no one else seemed to retain a recollection of the incident. I could not forget her even then : and how can I now ! There is a feeling which will never be discovered from the remembrance of that lonely wreck : and, perhaps, in this world of strange vicissitude, not a few might be found to furnish the counterpart of her altered and isolated fate.

Does it not sometimes occur to individuals whose dispositions are peculiarly formed for the enjoyment of social and domestic happiness to be thus left alone ? Not, perhaps, strictly alone in outward circumstances, but in inward experience. Their own nearest associates, whose hopes and hearts were naturally linked with theirs, are gone, removed by death, and no other appear to occupy their vacant place. It may be that the rightful owners and appointed guides of such have forsaken them, taking away what they could, and leaving forsaken the dismantled wreck to buffet every storm alone.

Many may sail athwart their uncertain track ; kindness may beam on them, compassion may sigh over their destiny, curiosity may pry under the semblance of sympathy, and self-interest attach itself with vigilant observance ; but among all these varieties there is nothing to do away with the abiding character of actual loneliness : there are none whose fate is interwoven with that of the deserted wreck : all have their own business, their own pleasures, their own little world of private interests and affections, in which the stranger, however pitied, or even loved, cannot really intermeddle. Friendship itself cannot, in most cases, obviate this. There may be high enjoyment in the transient interview, the longer sojourn, the look of tenderness and word of sympathy, but it is not to abide. Those companions, however beloved, can only come and pass away ; and the most frequent intercourse can confer no higher privilege than that of a visit.

One thing is wanting : the almost innumerable identities combined in that little magic word—Home. A home there may be, and a cheerful one ; but the faces that brighten, and the voices that gladden it, may not be its rightful, inalienable property. Passengers, not the crew : and when the crew are gone, short indeed is the sojourn of such guests ! the very loneliness of the situation lessening the claim on their continuance. It is not to every observer that such a condition appears pitiable : nor do all who are thus circumstanced realize what some cannot but feel : but persons there are so constituted as to form attachments not only to their fellow-creatures but to

places and inanimate objects, strong enough to render applicable what has been said in a far higher and nobler sense :

Here will I make my place of rest,
While others go and come ;
No more a stranger and a guest.
But like a child *at home*.

In all this I can draw such a parallel to the wreck at sea, that there are times when I can turn to no other retrospect in the whole chequered vision of by-gone days ; and on that I dwell, until my very heart bears a writhing testimony to the fulfilment of the word, “In the world ye *shall* have tribulation.”

This is the turning point : once brought to recall that word, how rich a flood of all-satisfying consolation is poured forth on the sorrowing soul by its delicious context—“Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” Yea, Lord ! we can derive good cheer from the very circumstance of the tribulation : for it is only grievous to such as, from the intenseness of their natural feelings, cleave to the dust with a tenacity wholly opposed to the call, “arise.” That dust which they would never voluntarily leave or relinquish, and which they cannot enjoy in such moderation as to be hourly prepared for a surrender, is forcibly taken away : and perhaps the finger of God is yet further manifested in so hedging in their way by his mysterious dispensations, that they cannot gather up another handful in place of what is gone. Such tribulation is an evident gift : it is not the stroke of an enemy, but the loving correction of a

Father ; and well may the soul, in tracing the work, "be of good cheer." It is thus, it is by such means as these, that Christ who has overcome the world *for* them, overcomes it in them also. The world is an expression of extensive meaning—it signifies here not only those things that are essentially evil, as opposed to God, but all those which perish in the using—the things that are visible and temporal ; and therefore liable to attract our notice before those that are unseen and eternal. It is the "world" which God's children are sanctioned to use as not abusing it ; but which some of them would certainly contrive to abuse if they were entrusted with its unlimited use. This same tempting world would overcome them ; and as they love it dearly they have tribulation in it, because it is not their own. But Christ has overcome it, and by his power keeps it from approaching to hurt them. Actual persecution is perhaps easier to endure than this quiescent state. Some who have tried both have found it so. They have been driven for shelter from the pelting storm unto Him whom they want energy to seek in the listless calm. But patience must "have her perfect work ;" and he who has told his people that they "have need of patience," will convince them of it too, by exercising them on the very points where they are most deficient. Some characters become exceedingly impatient and depressed under buffetings of unkindness and reproach : other spirits rise even naturally with such difficulties, and breast them bodily, or endure them with fortitude, but sink at once if stirring opposition be replaced by cool

neglect. It is wonderful how exquisitely each cross is adapted to the temper and disposition of its bearer. The strong are depressed, and the feeble stimulated: the sanguine are discouraged, and the drooping ones buoyed up: the loving are left alone, and the cold and indifferent beset by many claims. Those who can sever for a year with a careless shake of the hand, may meet again and again, and travel to the grave together: while such as cannot say 'Good night' without a pang and a starting tear, must part—one will be taken and the other left, or both be cast into distant and widely-sundered paths.

Such trouble the Lord takes to raise the beggars from their dunghill, and persuade them to sit among his princes! Peaceable fruits of righteousness are yielded, through his overruling power by the chastening that is not felt to be joyous but grievous,—very grievous, to poor humanity! That wreck at sea was forsaken of all her mates, but the sun from above shone sweetly upon her; the rains of heaven fell, to perform their cleansing work upon her decks, and to keep her little shreds of sails fair and white. The deep below refused to swallow her; yea, the element which perchance had overwhelmed her deserters, upbore her still to bask in the light of day. Her case was a singular one, thereby attracting the regard of many, some of whom might, as I have done, draw a profitable lesson from her losses. And though all who came to look on her passed away, and she seemed the more alone because their faces were hid, and their voices lost in distance, still they too were but children of earth; and their

sojourn, though prolonged to the end of their lives, might not have outlasted the passing day. And then, there is a crowning consolation in the fact that no man's life or merchandize was perilled in her frail being. She might sink or go to pieces, at any hour : her final dissolution would leave no perplexed survivor to struggle with surrounding waves. She was sad and solitary ; and her toilsome progress through deep waters brought her no gain : but she was where and what, the providence of God had ordained that she should be : and which of his children would desire to be otherwise ? Not I.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IDOLATRY.

It would certainly be a boon of magnitude to the more conscientious portion of the serious world if some sober, sound, experienced divine would afford them a clear definition of that abused word, 'Idolatry,' in all its allowable applications. Great liberties are taken with it; and I verily believe that some zealous Christians do often make sad the heart of the righteous whom the Lord hath not made sad, by bringing a charge of most serious import against them, in matters altogether as far removed from it as can well be imagined. God created this world a spotless paradise, for the immortal beings whom he placed in delegated sovereignty over all the inferior works of his mighty hand. Man, by rebellion, lost that rule of love; and the charter which replaced him in a measure, on his forfeited throne was, alas! one of different character. Before Adam, every living creature moved, in all the untarnished loveliness of its pristine state, harmless and fearless; and Adam looked on them, and as the majestic forms of animated nature passed before him, he exer-

cised his new prerogative by giving names to each. Emerging from the deluge, when this sin-blighted earth lifted her head, glittering with the moisture of that destroying flood, the animals again came in review before man. Noah who had marshalled them into the ark, beheld their egress from it; and received anew the grant—"The *fear* of you, and the *dread* of you shall be upon every beast, and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea : into your hand are they delivered."

In like manner the soil, which as a willing servant had yielded spontaneously every tree good for meat, and all that could minister to man's enjoyment, so long as his first and chiefest joy was in his God, became through his transgression a reluctant slave, putting nothing freely forth but thorns and briars ; and needing his most painful toil to compel the needful tribute of nutriment to his wants. Just and righteous was the doom : yet behold the unmerited mercy of our compassionate God : in promising the gift of His own Son, delivered up as a ransom for us all, He freely with him gives us all things. To the corn that furnishes our bread he adds full many a luscious fruit, of aromatic flavour ; and over earth's surface—yea upon those penal thorns and briars—he has scattered tints and forms of such exquisite beauty and grace, that one may fancy the very pallet from which Eden was pencilled out is left for us to gaze on ; the very mould in which its glorious forms were cast, preserved : in token that earth shall yet again

bloom, more lovely and more magnificent than in the infancy of her days.

So it is with the irrational creation : to the far greater part of them man is an object of instinctive terror—the fear of him, and the dread of him are upon them ; and such service as they may be brought to yield is compulsory, painful, hateful to them. But here again an exception is made : and one so touching, that unbelief itself, when stumbling at the fact of Adam's reign of love over all the creatures, may cease to cavil, in beholding a sight so common that its familiarity deadens its effect on our minds—the fond, the faithful, docile, devoted Dog, putting to shame all human attachments by the ardour of his irrepressible affection for man—for a master who, perchance, scarcely rewards with a smile the beseeching look that for hours keeps watch, to seize and rejoice in the very slightest token of approving notice.

If I turn to by-gone days, I cannot name the period from early infancy to the present hour, unmarked by this relic of paradisaical confidence and love. How often when all human help was far away, and dangers too fearful to record beset my path, how often has the Lord made this creature of his will the means of my defence ! Yes, in the hour of weakness, ere I had learned to endure “as seeing Him who is invisible,” when poor humanity was nigh failing under the agonized throb of terror and dismay, He, the Lord, pitying the weakness of his creature, has given me cheer and encouragement, and sweet reassurance, even by the bold, bright, stedfast gaze of a watchful dog,

now keenly bent in the direction of expected harm, now turned with quick intelligence to my face, and almost saying in its fiery glance, 'Fear not my mistress: the hand that would injure you must first encounter the strength of these pointed fangs, and the rage of a heart that would be maddened to see you wronged.' It was in the noble race of the Newfoundland breed that I was permitted thus for a time to confide; and often do I humbly bless my covenant God, to whom all things do bow and obey, for the cordial so given in hours of fainting apprehension. I do not now rest on means: for he has taught me to look far higher than an arm of flesh, or the heart of creature-love; but I hope never to forget my past experience; never to despise the meanest instrument of his tender compassion towards me.

But I have wandered from the point: which was to call in question the propriety of stigmatising as idolatry a high appreciation of those things, so beautifully illustrative of the divine pity—the sweet flowers of our gardens, and those few among the animal creation that reciprocate the measure of attachment we may evince for them. As a matter of report, I should scarcely credit it: but so often has the rebuke been directly levelled at me, and by persons so entirely unconnected with each other, at such distances too of time and place, that it has occurred to me there must be somewhat of a general persecution going on against offenders of my stamp; and it may not be amiss at a season when our greenhouse plants require a little extra attention, and our small dogs a warmer cushion,

to put in a word on behalf of this maligned body of reputed idolators.

If any among us can be proved to waste her valuable hours on the selfish gratification even of a taste which the Lord implanted in Adam's mind when He set him to dress the garden of Eden and to keep it—if higher duties are neglected or hurried over, and occupations more needful to others though less congenial to ourselves be put aside :—if money that ought to be devoted to the service of our fellow creatures be squandered on a fancy, or that money's worth, in energy and application, be diverted from its proper channel—I have not one word to say in defence of the accused person : the case is altogether excluded from my plea. Again, if a pampered dog engrosses any part of that consideration which rightly belongs to our fellow-immortals, so as to entrench upon their rights—if it be made the object of wasteful expenditure, or permitted to become a nuisance to others, by its rude or peevish ways—then the like conclusion is to be drawn : but conscientiously speaking, that has not been the case with me in either instance, yet have I been sorely persecuted. I counsel my sympathizing friends, who may shrink from a rebuke the justice of which they cannot feel, to fight the matter out with their assailants ; not merely on the common ground of unreasonableness, but on the far more serious one of an abuse of scripture language, which ought in no instance to be suffered.

I remember, some years since, that I had arranged

three small jars filled with exquisite flowers on the tables of my apartment, when a young minister, warm in the fresh glow of newly-awakened zeal, coming in and detecting me in the very act of expressing delight at their loveliness, put on a sad face, and solemnly rebuked my "painted idols"—or rather me in their behalf. I made no reply, but invited him to come in the evening and take tea. Meanwhile I just trebled the number of flower-jars, and on his looking round with dismay, observed, 'See, my friend, here are nine of them; and if you talk to me again as you did this morning, I promise you the sight of eighteen the next time you come.' Then I made out the case, much to my own satisfaction; and so far as deeds might be relied on, I should think to his also: for from that day he never came to see me without bringing a small reinforcement for my ranks of painted idols.

'But dogs are such disagreeable things: many people dislike them, and you should, in consideration for the feelings of others, keep your dog away.' So I have occasionally been told; and perhaps by a friend whose pouncet-box perpetually opened kept my little dog sneezing most piteously, and brought tears into my eyes. I could not be so unpolite as to say, 'Banish your snuff-box, and then we will consider about the other nuisance;' but it so happens that, according to the favourite theory of idolatry, every one seems to have an idol—not unfrequently himself—which he is just as unwilling to dethrone as I am to drown Fiddelle.

I know a person whose attachment to the canine race is as strong as can well be imagined, and well-grounded as could be required. She had a noble, a majestic, an invaluable dog, of the purest Newfoundland breed, devoted to her with an affection that occasioned him to pine and dwindle away under any temporary absence of his mistress. He was, moreover, the parting gift of one so dear—so inexpressibly beloved—one who had been cut off in a moment too, by a sudden stroke—that it was impossible not to prize the relic beyond all other mere earthly treasures. Conscience, however, interfered: she was poor, and dependent on her own exertions. She had others to consider, and to them it was a privileged duty to devote her all. Circumstances obliged her to relinquish her cottage, in a comparatively rural and cheap situation, and to become a lodger in the busy haunts of men, the metropolis itself, where the accommodation and keep of so very large an animal would have formed a very heavy item of daily expenditure; and she felt that the question had become a serious one, where positive duty was opposed to feelings such as those who understand them may appreciate: to those who cannot, it would be idle to describe them. The decision was made, with tears, aye, and with prayer too—for self was very strong, but it was made.

‘To sell the dog, and devote the price to charitable purposes?’ No; that would have told well; but I am relating facts. The donor had said, ‘Never part with Nero, except to me,’—and though large sums were freely offered for the beautiful creature, every thing

of the kind was rejected. The dog was doomed, with a regard to his own affectionate and faithful exclusiveness of devotion. All unsuspecting he was led forth, by neighbours who were familiar with him, and chained to the stump of a tree. He looked around, with patient good humour, waiting to see what was required of him; and with the steady aim of two practised military hands, one bullet through his heart, another through his brain, without a single momentary pang of fear or suffering, stretched the noble creature lifeless on the earth. Three musquets were loaded; but he who bore the third, who had faced many a cannon in the field of battle, instead of discharging it, turned away and wept.

This has been called cruelty: and the self-indulgence that still keeps a little creature which can honestly be sustained on the scrapings of the dinner plates, is stigmatized as idolatry. One is as true as the other: and both are false. The first was cruel, not to the dog, but to carnal self: the latter does but lighten the labour of many a solitary hour by extorting a smile of pleasure at the gambols of a thing so harmlessly happy: a creature made subject to vanity—to all the ills and sufferings under which the whole creation groans—not willingly, not by its own transgression, but by that of man. Is it idolatry to recognize the hand of the Most High in the wonderful instinct of which He alone is the source, and to number this among the works that praise him—the gifts that gladden me?

I do not even covet the elevated view that could

overlook the impressive lesson marked out in these miscalled idols. Who shall gainsay the authority which bids me consider the lilies of the field how they grow (those beautiful Guernsey lilies now before me, how I delight in them!) and which tells me that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these? Splendid, most splendid are the starry heavens, on which David gazed in rapturous adoration of the skill which formed them! but is there no trace, no brighter trace of that wonder-working hand in the little creature lying at my feet, feeble and timid, shrinking from the uplifted finger of menaced correction, and never dreaming of self-defence; but roused into the boldness of the lion, every hair stiffening with energetic effort, and the flash of rage kindling in his eye, if a sound be heard that threatens annoyance to his friend. Is there no lesson, to crimson my cheek with the tint of shame, and dew my eye with the tear of self-reproach, when I follow up the contemplation, and measure *my* love, *my* faithfulness, *my* zeal, *my* devotion to a heavenly Master who saveth my life from destruction, daily crowning me with loving-kindness and tender mercies—when I measure them by those of an irrational brute to one who just feeds him, smiles on him to-day, and may forsake him to-morrow? Yes, God be praised, there is a lesson, most humbling to my soul: and while thus his inferior works continually praise him, silently fulfilling the duties of their little sphere, be it mine to look on, and learn, and adore, and join the chorus in which all his saints give thanks unto him, and magnify his name.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE SCHOOL.

'THE chain of events' is an expression familiar to almost every one; it is often employed by those who deny the especial hand of divine providence in ordering the affairs of men. If I showed one of these persons a material chain, assuring him that the links of iron, silver or gold, were indebted to no fashioning tool, but shaped themselves, and casually fell into that connected form as they issued from the mine, he would rightly think me a fool, or conclude that I considered him as one. Yet 'good fortune,' 'bad fortune,' 'lucky coincidences,' 'evil chances,' and such like, are heads under which he would coolly arrange any series of perfect links that I could point out, in the course of an eventful life. Nay, he would smile at my fanaticism, if I ventured to suggest that in a work so beautifully adapted to an ultimate end the hand of a governing power was perceptible in every stage.

What a dark and formless chaos must any human mind present, where the spirit of God has not moved, nor the voice of Omnipotence proclaimed "Let there

be light!" Comparing his own crooked and perplexed course with that of some acquaintance, who acknowledging God in all his ways, has found the promise sure that He would direct his paths, the unbelieving soul repines at his own 'ill fortune,' and marvels, if it do not murmur, at the 'good luck' attending another's prayerful undertakings. Let but the day-beam find admittance, and how changed will be the scene! Past events will assume a new character, each will be found to have formed a link, exquisitely fitted and adjusted by divine skill: and the hand so long unseen, so tardily acknowledged, will be recognized as still shaping the succeeding portions, or rather unfolding what had long been fashioned secretly, until the last bright circlet is found to rest on his eternal throne.

We may adopt Archbishop Leighton's beautiful illustration of a chain, which he describes as having its first and last links—election and final salvation—'up in heaven, in God's own hand:' the middle one, which he says is effectual calling, being 'let down to earth, into the hearts of his children; and they laying hold on it, have sure hold on the other two, for no power can sever them.' Then, the events that lead to that calling, and those which follow it, even to the final consummation and bliss of God's people in heaven, may be considered as so many connected and connecting links, not one of which but bears evidence of the Master's hand. How often does Satan exert all the skill of his infernal mechanism to hammer out an additional fetter for his blind and hopeless captive,

already fast bound in misery and iron, which is laid hold on by the divine Alchymist, and changed into a golden link in the wondrous chain of providential mercies, destined to form the subject of an everlasting song of praise in the mouth of that ransomed sinner! Events that wrung my heart with piercing anguish, and of which I could not but say they were the strokes of an enemy, I am enabled to look back upon, with so deep a sense of their value and importance, that although I may not dare to say the work could not have been perfect without them, yet I do thankfully acknowledge them among the richest mercies. I can say it of every dispensation towards me, that God has wrought it into a link in that precious chain: and sweet indeed is the retrospect of by-gone days, when thus enlightened by the beams of covenant mercy.

My dumb boy once told me, very abruptly, that he had been thanking God for making him deaf and dumb when he was very little. On my inquiring why, he chuckled, and expressed, in his simple way, a great deal of exultation, repeating that it was 'very good.' At length he told me, not without a hint that he pitied my 'doll-head' for failing to discover any thing so obvious, that having been taken regularly to mass, by his poor parents, he should if he had been like other children, have committed the great sin of idolatry. However, he said, not being able to hear, he could only be made to kneel, cross himself, and hold up his hands towards the crucifix and images. When I inquired if he did not pray at all, at such

times, with his heart, he repeated the word 'pray' with a laugh, assuring me that he never had felt the smallest respect for the objects before him: that he saw they were stone, wood, or paper, and as such regarded them. He added, that he had no idea what praying was, until he beheld us, at family worship, look up, and speak with so much reverence and love (describing it) to One whom we could not see. Then with lively joy, he repeated, 'God is good—very good, God made little John deaf.' So great was his exultation in this thought, when only twelve years old, that he would laugh and jump, because, as he told me, it made the devil cry. I gained an interesting lesson; and following his example, endeavoured to number up the blessings contained in what the world would call my numerous misfortunes. It certainly showed me many beautiful links in the great chain of providential mercies, never before recognized as such.

Among the ties that bound me to a particular spot, one was pre-eminently strong and pure. Often do I recall it with fond regret, and dearly do I love to dwell on its remembered features. The circumstance was this:—The gospel having been totally withdrawn, or rather unjustifiably thrust out, from the pulpit of my stated place of worship, and the message of reconciliation through the blood of the cross silenced all around us, I was induced to admit a few humble but pious neighbours, on the sabbath evenings of a long winter, to join with my family in the church service, and to hear a sermon read from old Flavel, or some other of that awakening school. Several children attended;

and as they occupied too much room in my little cottage parlour, and were withal somewhat restless, I told them they must stay away in future, adding, that if any of them really desired to hear and pray, I would devote an hour in the earliest part of the Sunday afternoon to them. Good Friday following next after, half a-dozen pretty little girls, leading two tiny boys, walked up to my door at four o'clock—I had stipulated for their previously attending church—and the spokeswoman, dropping a courtesy to the maid who opened it, said, ‘Please ma’am to-day is like Sunday; and may we have a chapel to-day?’

I was from home, visiting a sick person, and on my return was rather startled to find how resolved my little neighbours were to establish their claim on ‘a chapel.’ I set myself to prepare for it on Easter day, when more than a dozen assembled, to whom I read, and familiarly explained, a chapter, asked a few questions, offered a short prayer with them, and, instead of a sermon treated them with Cennick’s ‘Letter to Little Children.’ My congregation was certainly not very orderly: I had to pass an oblique censure on most of them, by commending one for steadiness and attention. But I was not disheartened: and the next Sunday brought me near twenty. From that time a task was commenced to which the Lord enabled me to devote myself for more than a year, sacrificing to it every other work. I had so full a party of these dear children weekly assembling, that the largest room in my cottage would not contain more than half of them. I therefore divided

them, having the girls first, from four to half-past four, and as soon as they are gone, the boys. It was a singular scene! They belonged to the families of small trades-people, and the many individuals connected with a very large national establishment, hard by. Every one of them could read well, and our plan was remodelled to suit the demand of so large a number—above sixty—on the attention of one poor unassisted female.

A long table, or rather several tables, being placed across the room from corner to corner, to afford the greatest possible length, and covered with a green cloth, benches, stools, and chairs were set round it to the best advantage, with a reserve of bibles for the very few who possessed none. The party being admitted and properly ranged, an introductory prayer was offered up, a hymn sung, and then a chapter given out, to be read verse by verse, each young person being questioned on it; and all that the teacher could communicate, in the way of illustration, inference, and application, most freely imparted. At the close, another hymn was sung, and a short thanksgiving concluded all. The sight was lovely, when the girls, in their neat Sunday frocks and caps, or ringlets (for bonnets were laid aside) sat round this cheerful board, at a feast such as this world's princes could not spread. They were modest, quiet, intelligent, and apt to learn. On departing, each received the gift of a tract; and time enough only for a hasty cup of coffee to be swallowed was suffered to elapse before the signal was given, and in rushed the boys.

It is impossible to describe the wild eagerness of delight with which those sprightly boys would over-leap the benches and secure each his assigned place. It required some determination to keep their spirits within due bounds, so inexpressibly dear to them was the work. Eight o'clock was the appointed hour for separating; but often have they coaxed their happy teacher for leave to sing 'just one hymn more,' until the bell tolled nine. Many of them had fine voices, and were taught to accompany a splendid band in the church: their singing, therefore, spontaneous as it was, and with feelings, if not hearts, attuned to the occasion, was often exceedingly fine. Many a passer-by has crept in at the little gate, crossed the small garden, and laid his head among the roses that profusely covered the cottage wall, to listen while twenty or thirty clear young voices, led by a child of singular talent, breathed out some of our finest specimens of devotional melody.

Commendations, rebukes, and tracts, being suitably dealt out, away bustled the little congregation, and the Lord only knows how my spirit has been elated, while, from bodily exhaustion, I could scarcely walk across the room. Sometimes D. would come down on Saturday night, and take the whole work into his hands, rejoicing in it, even as the boys did to receive his teaching: and there are some of those precious children now in heaven with him, singing a sweeter song than those in which they so loved to join below. Others there are, yet on earth, who will recognize in this faint outline the features of a scene

most lovely in their eyes, and precious to their hearts. They will remember the little parlour, the long table, the wide rustic window, the clustering roses without, and the glowing countenances within. Let them breathe once more our oft-repeated prayer, that the seed there sown may yield a rich and abundant increase !

It was one of the severest of my trials to quit that simple cottage, to break up my darling school, and to leave those lambs in the wilderness. I recollect with what rebellious struggles my will at length submitted. I remember the last Sunday when, every piece of furniture being removed, and the house shut up, we opened it again for the sole purpose of once more enjoying our cherished privilege. It was a gloomy season, though summer smiled brightly upon us. The beautiful rose-tree which covered the cottage walls, and even ran over its roof, had suddenly withered, nobody knew why or how : but the garden was full of flowers, every one of which the dear children plucked and brought to me, with many tears and sobs, before they left it. It seemed a dispensation of almost unmixed severity to divorce me from that spot, endeared by many a recollection of those who never, never could revisit it again, and sanctified by a work so sweet, so holy. There had the dumb boy ripened for heaven ; and thence had his happy spirit taken its flight. My Sunday pupils delighted in Jack, whose vigilant oversight of them, and inexorable firmness in reporting every case of misbehaviour, often tempted the merry boys to transgress, for the purpose of pro

voking his displeasure. And very touching it was to see the whole of them, with not a few of the girls, attired in their best, and formed in procession, following on foot the carriage which bore the dumb boy's remains to their final resting-place. A four miles walk through melting snow, under a drizzling rain, on a comfortless day, was no slight proof of their grateful affection for one whose sorrow they strove thus to soothe; and none who witnessed Jack's funeral will ever forget the moment when those boys drew close around the open grave, and sung over the coffin their favourite hymn—

Lo! he comes, with clouds descending,

Dear children! my rebellion almost revives when I think of the bitterness of spirit with which I forsook them: yet it was a link, a bright link in my golden chain, for that reluctant movement brought me into a more important field, among the victims of popish delusion, to see some brands plucked from that terrific burning, when even on the verge of eternal flames. It was a strange transition, and most uncongenial; but I am bound to render praises unto God for it. Neither was the former work unowned or unblessed, some instances occurred, which I may perhaps relate at another time; proving that the Lord was among us, in the Sabbath-school—or rather Bible-class, for there was no teaching, except from the word of God. I am deeply persuaded that a few hours thus devoted, by those who have no lack of means or opportunity to labour among the children of their humbler though

respectable neighbours, would bring in a vast increase of mutual benefit, would bind in an endearing tie the different classes of society, and tend to glorify God by serving him in the gospel of His Son.

25*

PREACHING OF FLOWERS.

Your voiceless lips, O flowers, are living preachers,
Each cup a pulpit,—every leaf a book,
Supplying to my fancy numerous teachers,
From loneliest nook.

'Neath cloistered boughs each floral bell that swingeth,
And tolls its perfume on the passing air,
Makes Sabbath in the fields, and ever ringeth
A call to prayer ;

Not to the domes where crumbling arch and column
Attest the feebleness of mortal hand,
But to that fane most catholic and solemn
Which God hath planned ;

To that cathedral, boundless as our wonder,
Whose quenchless lamps the sun and moon supply,
Its choir the winds and waves,—its organ thunder,
Its dome the sky.

There, amid solitude and shade, I wander
Through the green aisles, and, stretched upon the sod,
Awed by the silence, reverently ponder
The ways of God.

JUN 13 1949

